UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF A RACE-BASED ETHNIC STUDIES COURSE ON FIRST-YEAR, CHICANX/LATINX UNDERGRADUATES: A CASE STUDY OF THE DIVERSITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT INTERMOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP) on 1st–year Chicanx/Latinx undergraduate students' development of social consciousness. DSP is a yearlong course grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and offered to historically underrepresented U.S. Students of Color at Intermountain University (IMU). This case study finds that participants developed a greater sense of a Chicanx/Latinx identity as a result of participating in the intensive, race–conscious set of learning experiences that the DSP offered. The study includes a set of policy, theory, and practice-based recommendations that may help other colleges and universities design courses and other learning experiences similar to DSP. The study also finds evidence that enhancing Latinx/Chicanx students' social consciousness and identity improves the likelihood that they will graduate with greater self-awareness and personal agency in advancing social justice for their communities.

Mi mami, Socorro, for raising such strong mujeres. For my father who is still learning how to accept living in a house full of strong mujeres. For my four sisters and one amazing brother for having my back and learning from my mistakes. For my brown babies, Luna, Faustino, and Joaquin for patiently understanding mommy has to do homework. And finally for my amazing partner, Roger, who has stood by, supported and followed me all my college years, love you babe!

The new mestizo copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode—nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned. Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 79).

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I take this opportunity to thank my dear committee members who were not only the reason I was convinced to earn my doctoral degree but because since day one the have never left my sight. Their continued support in securing funding for me every year as a research assistant with *Adelante*, where I found a home away from home, to their mentorship and their belief that this brown girl can actually defeat all odds against me and actually obtain her Ph.D. I thank you and hope to offer the same support to my students as you did for me! Most importantly, I would also like to thank the amazing Diversity Scholars to whom without your valuable voices, this work would have never been possible. Thank you so much for sharing your lived experiences and educational reflections with me.

CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF A RACE-BASED ETHNIC STUDIES COURSE ON FIRST-YEAR, CHICANX/LATINX UNDERGRADUATES: A CASE STUDY OF THE DIVERSITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT INTERMOUNTAIN UNIVERSITY

Statement of the Problem

It has been nearly 80 years since Stephen M. Corey (1936) published one of the first studies regarding *the impact of college on students* as a way to better understand the attitudinal differences among college students (Feldman, p. xi, foreword in Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Yet, there is still little known about how students change as a result of going to college. This continues to be the case, although, as Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) have pointed out, the most prolific scholars in this area, like Alexander Astin, Kenneth A. Feldman, and Theodore M. Newcomb, have been "instrumental in precipitating a virtual torrent of studies on the characteristics of collegiate institutions and their students and how students change and benefit during and after their college years from college attendance" (p. xv). Yet despite years of studying college students, there remain many missing pieces to understand how students' aspirations, values, goals, and identities are affected during and beyond college as a result of particular educational or co-educational experiences while in college.

One of the reasons why we continue to know so little is that it has been methodologically difficult to attribute changes in students' dispositions and experiences during college to attitudinal and behavioral changes they may demonstrate after college (Villalpando, 2002). Research in the field of higher education has clearly established that students change during and after college, but it is still unclear whether the students have changed as a result of their experiences *during* college. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) questioned whether these documented changes in students are just due to *maturational changes* among 18–26-year-olds, or whether students have truly *developed* new and enduring identities, personal characteristics, values, and attitudes as a result of the particular environment in which they participated during college.

The fact that most of the research on *whether* or *how* college *impacts* students has relied almost exclusively on quantitative analyses of survey findings further complicates this question (Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1993; Kuh, 2001). These findings, at best, assert relationships between a particular experience and its corresponding outcome (Creswell, 2014; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Indeed, the belief that utilizing quantitative methodology can lead to cause-and-effect outcomes continues to be a highly contested issue (Creswell, 2014).

Conversely, qualitative research in the field of higher education often includes accounts by participants who relate changes in their attitudes, values, identities, and beliefs to specific experiences or environments during college (Creswell, 2013). These two distinct methodological approaches led to the present state of tension where the field of higher education research generally finds studies of college student change and development inconclusive. This tension leads higher education researchers to temper

their conclusions by noting that the changes or development recorded in students during or after they graduate from college might only be short–term in duration. The convention in higher education research is to assume that unless follow–up, longitudinal studies determine that changes in students during college have persisted long after graduating from college, those changes observed during college should only be considered transitory changes. However, in qualitative studies, when students themselves make attributions between a particular outcome originating from a specific environment, then a researcher is at greater liberty to describe the existence of a possible causal relationship, but only because the participants themselves have drawn that conclusion (Creswell, 2014).

Yet, although the body of qualitative research in higher education has expanded considerably during the last 20 years (see: Denzin, 2009; Maxwell, 2004, 2012), including studies that draw more *causal conclusions* between changes in students and particular student outcomes (Lather, 2004; Merriam, 2014), many still challenge these studies as methodologically ambiguous and lacking the type of rigorous methodological controls to support causal conclusions (Creswell, 2014). The research literature on the impact of college on students has generally concluded that students do indeed change as a result of attending college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). However, these findings have been contested due to the inability to conclusively determine whether the effects of college are transitory if they are genuinely "caused" by their exposure to a particular set of collegiate experiences, or whether the observed changes are developmental or maturational changes (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Therein lie the major challenges and tensions in assessing the impact of college experiences or environments on students. This study emphasizes that college does indeed

change students, but this particular study looks at how Students of Color reflect on their participation in an ethnic studies course.

This study draws from qualitative methodological approaches to better understand *whether*, *how*, and *if* an ethnic studies course, where Students of Color are exposed to a particularly intensive and race–conscious set of learning experiences at IMU[1] in the State of Utah, has impacted and changed students. This study focuses on such race intensive ethnic studies course to further support research on the benefits of ethnic studies courses for Students of Color (Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Morrell, 2002; Stovall, 2014), which I will discuss in the next chapter. Of particular interest is how these race–conscious learning experiences influence the development of *social consciousness,* through their participation in Critical Service Learning as part of a component within the ethnic studies course. Social consciousness is defined as combinations of values, attitudes, and activities students engage in out of a purposeful interest to enhance socially just conditions in their home communities (Villalpando, 2002). Social consciousness can include contributing or *giving back* to their community within a social justice framework. A qualitative approach is best suited for this study to answer the questions on the impact of the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP) and draw the conclusions on how the DS participants identify the impact of the DSP on their learning, their social consciousness and academic success. This is the basis for my data collection.

Despite being the largest group of Students of Color at IMU and on a majority of

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[1] Intermountain University (IMU) is a pseudonym.

most other American college campuses (Almanac "Chronicle", 2014), Chicanx/Latinx[2] undergraduates continue to be understudied and underserved in higher education (Gandara, 1999; Solórzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005).

This study contributes to the research literature on Chicanx/Latinx college students, by answering the following questions involving a longitudinal analysis concerning the impact of this purposeful Diversity Scholar Program (DPS) on their development of critical, race and social consciousness during their 1st-year experience in college, by taking into account their initial predisposition toward a race-conscious identity during their 1st year, and then by assessing how the DSP had an influence in the students' development after college. Thus, this study is guided by the following questions:

1. How do Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in the *Diversity Scholars Program* (DSP) describe their experience and involvement in the Program, 5 to 7 years after enrolling in it (presumably at or near graduation)?

2. How do Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in DSP describe its influence on their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and social consciousness?

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[2] This is a recent gender neutral term used to replace Latino, Latina, Latina/o as it exceeds gender binaries and makes room for trans, queer, a-binary, gender nonconforming, and nonbinary individuals (Ramirez, "Huffington Post", 2016). Otherwise Chican@/Latin@ includes students who self-identify as Chicana women, Chicano men, Latino men, and Latina women (Aldama, Sandoval, & García, 2012; Villalpando, 2003). "Chicana/o" is an identity adopted by people of Mexican descent who primarily reside in the U.S., whether born in Mexico or in the U.S., and regardless of citizenship or lawful residency status. The term is an expression of political liberation that gained recognition during the Chicano liberation movements in 1960s and 1970s. Such a self-defining term is used among liberal and progressive members who object to the Eurocentric term "Hispanic" (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Elenes, 1997). To disrupt the gender hierarchy and avoid repetition, this proposed study also adopts the convention designated by the @ symbol to reference both males (ending in the letter "o") and females (ending in the letter "a").

3. In what ways do Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in the DSP reflect on how it nurtured or empowered academic success and achievement?

These questions contribute to research that aims to document the impact college can have on students under purposeful college programs of support both academically and personally. To further understand the need for such programs of support, a need for background on the demographics of the state, the demographics of the institutions being analyzed along with the description of the Diversity Scholars Program as it stands within the institution is needed to provide context to the study. Additionally, I provide a deeper context on the particular impact the ethnic studies course with a Critical Service Learning component had overall on the Chicanx/Latinx students. I conclude this chapter with a summary on the purpose of this study and the significance the study can have as we continue to find ways to best support Students of Color's academic and personal success during and beyond college.

Background and Settings

Utah's Changing Demographics

In 2008, the United States Census Bureau declared Utah the state with the fastest growing population in the country. Such changes became more apparent between April 2010 through July 2012, when the U.S. population experienced a 1.7% increase, while the state of Utah experienced a nearly doubled population increase at 3.3% population change (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Accordingly, the total estimated population in 2012 for the state of Utah was 2,855,287 in comparison to 313,914,040 of the U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

Latin@ and Asian American/Pacific Islander new births and immigration almost

exclusively drove this tremendous population growth in Utah. The racial and ethnic makeup of Utah consists of approximately 80% White population in comparison to 63% of the total White population in the U.S. The Latin@ population in Utah is above 14% and is considered the fastest growing racial/ethnic group both in Utah and in the U.S., where it constitutes 17% of the total population.

To the extent that Utah is viewed as having any measurable presence of People of Color, most of it is comprised of Latin@s, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders. The population of Black or African Americans in Utah consists of approximately 1.3%, in contrast to their presence of over 13% in the U.S. general population. Indeed, even Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have a larger presence than Blacks/African Americans in Utah, with over 2.5% (Gozdziak & Martin, 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013).

The American Indian and Alaska Native population in Utah is another racial/ethnic group that outnumbers their presence in Utah at 1.5%, while in the U.S. they are less than .5% (Gozdziak & Martin, 2005; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). Table 1 provides an overview of the ethnic/racial makeup of Utah and U.S. populations.

These demographic and population patterns are important in contextualizing the present study. A state like Utah, where only about 20% of its residents self-identify as People of Color raises important questions about how well these communities are faring and being represented in educational, political, social, and economic systems in the state (Vasquez, p. xi, in Castellanos, Gloria, & Kamimura, 2006). With respect to access to higher education and postbaccalaureate achievement of underrepresented communities who are denied full participation, most economic models project diminishing benefits to the historically strong economic stability of the state, let alone the generation of

intellectual and social capital that will drive Utah's future development (Castellanos, Gloria, & Kamimura, 2006; Perlich, 2008, 2004).

Intermountain University

Intermountain University (IMU) is the public flagship, Research 1 University in the State of Utah. While there has been an increase in the population of People of Color in Utah, IMU has increased the enrollment of Students of Color only modestly and not in proportion to their general population increases throughout the state or nation. Thus, the state's flagship, identified as one of Utah's top three economic and intellectual drivers (Salt Lake Chamber, 2015) fails to serve the representation and needs of its growing diverse population.

In academic year 1999–2000, there were a total of 19,813 undergraduate students, of whom only 7% (n = 1,331) identified as Students of Color. Over a decade later, in 2011–2012, the total student population had increased to 23,275 undergraduate students, of whom 13% (n = 2,995) of the total student population identified as Students of Color.

Beginning in 2009–2010, Latinx students comprised the largest ethnic group at IMU at 5% of the total undergraduate student body (Office of Budget & Institutional Analysis, 2010). This pace of growth for Latinx students, unless understood and served more appropriately, will result in intensifying the existing educational achievement gaps at IMU and at other postbaccalaureate campuses in Utah (Alemán & Rorrer, 2006). The underrepresentation of Students of Color at the university helped to spur discussions on the need of a retention program to act on behalf of these students. As a result, in 2007 the creation of a retention program that critically takes into consideration the needs of

Students of Color was established.

The Diversity Scholars/1st-Year Experience Program

During the 2007–2008 academic year, the Associate Vice President for Equity and Diversity (AVPED)[3] at IMU conceptualized a for-credit, academic enrichment program for Students of Color with the intent to enhance their retention and graduation rates. Various IMU senior administrative and academic leaders initially challenged the AVPED's idea to create a full three credits, 1- to 2-year-long, high-impact academic enrichment seminar for 1st-year Students of Color. In an interview with the AVPED,[4] he provided multiple examples of the fierce opposition he received from high ranking vice presidents, such as a chief academic officer who questioned whether the AVPED's proposal would lead to admitting more students who did not meet the minimum admissions criteria or a chief student affairs officer who described the proposal as creating a "ghetto for minority students in classes taught by other minority faculty." One influential dean lamented that the proposal would result in tracking "even more unqualified minority students into his college," which according to him, already housed excessive numbers of "minority students who routinely fail out of the major." At one point, a campus staff attorney even questioned whether the DSP might violate "the Affirmative Action law passed by the U.S. Supreme Court" since it would be designed to "attract minority students."

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[3] Dr. Octavio Villalpando, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy, served as IMU's Associate Vice President for Equity and Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer from 2007 through the 2014 academic year.

[4] Conducted with Dr. Villalpando, November 2015.

The AVPED initially framed the DSP around higher education research (including his) that found that when Students of Color at predominantly White campuses begin college with opportunities to network with each other, engage with faculty of color in their courses, participate in staff-led personal and academic enrichment activities, and most importantly, develop the awareness, language, and critical navigational skills to succeed in college, they are more likely to graduate with stronger commitments to contributing to social justice and social equity (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Solórzano & Villalpando, 1998; Villalpando, 1996). To ensure that students were making connections across campus and had opportunities to access academic support services like tutoring and advisement, the AVPED also assigned professional staff that served as academic advisors and program directors in the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs (CESA) to the DSP. He explained that upon taking the position of Chief Diversity Officer, CESA staff operated a somewhat unstructured one-unit seminar that about one dozen students attended every other week. Some of the students in this seminar sometimes appeared disengaged from the conversations and only participated because they were required to do so as a condition of having been admitted even though they did not meet the minimum admissions index. Like other students in similar situations whose admission had been "sponsored" by various other campus units like the LGBT Resource Center, the Athletics Department, etc., CESA required these students to check in periodically with advisors and attend this seminar.

The AVPED built on the CESA seminar, and expanded enrollment to high achieving students, students with merit-based scholarships, and students who had an interest in the topic addressed in what would be the creation and expansion of a year-long

ethnic studies course with a Service Learning component (for more information, see Appendix A). He based this expansion on research that suggests that students of different academic abilities can thrive when they work together in an academic setting, regardless of their level of prior academic achievement. It was important to recruit faculty that would also best fit this group of students. Therefore, the AVPED also attempted to recruit exceptional instructors of color who were tenured or on the tenure-track to maximize the students' early exposure to faculty of color. Furthermore, the AVPED shared that his main regret was not having succeeded in persuading African American, Asian American, or American Indian faculty to teach in the program. They were apprehensive about the workload involved in teaching in an undergraduate pilot program that required frequent meetings with the other instructors to create a common syllabus and expose the students to the same material during the year.

Fortunately, he succeeded in persuading a Chicanx education and ethnic studies tenured professor and a tenure-track Chicanx education professor (tenure-track at the time but now tenured) to teach the inaugural and 2nd year of the program. Two years later, another Chicanx untenured faculty member in communication and ethnic studies along with another faculty member (who reluctantly joined) agreed to become additional instructors in DSP, but it would be 3 more years before other faculty would reluctantly agree to teach in the DSP. By then, the DSP had started to generate substantial revenue through student enrollments and both directors of ethnic studies and gender studies, the two umbrella departments under which DSP was taught, began to schedule new program faculty into the DSP teaching rotation.

The AVPED continued to subsidize DSP by providing resources to hire teaching

assistants and Service Learning coordinators, as well as providing some of the faculty with a small fund to compensate outside lecturers and other speakers.

The DSP has been a critical component to the Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) at IMU, not only for their successful retention program but also because of its tremendous success in supporting Students of Color during their 1st year (Alemán & Gaytán, 2016). The central components of DSP have remained intact, including regular interactions with faculty and staff of color, mandatory asset-based academic advising, multiple mentoring relationships, and off–campus community engagement opportunities through a Critical Service Learning pedagogy (Mitchell, 2008). What makes the program even more distinct is the development of a cohort model that brings in mixed ability students.

Since its inception in 2007 up to 2012, there have been close to 800 Students of Color in the program. Among them, approximately 70% of the students are considered sponsored (not regularly admissible through the standard admissions criteria), while the other 30% of the students are high-achieving students, most of whom have received merit–based scholarships. Approximately 46% of the students in the program identify as Latinx, followed by Asian Americans at 20%, and African American, American Indian, and mixed–race students at the remaining 34%. Additionally, 60% of the students identify as nonnative English language speakers, representing the presence of American Indian, Pacific Islander or other Asian Americans, and Latinxs (Alemán & Gaytán, 2016).

A total of 80% of all DSP students are first–generation college students. This is in contrast to IMU's 1st-year students, of whom only about 20% are first-generation. The

OED estimates that 6-10% of the students are undocumented, which is lower than the national average of 25% found in similar programs at other universities across the country (Alemán & Gaytán, 2016).

The overall retention rates among Students of Color at IMU have increased due to the DSP. For example, during DSP's 1st year of operation, the 1st-to-2nd year retention rate for African American students was at a dismal 17%. Five year later, their 1st-to-2nd year retention rate was approximately 87%. Indeed, DSP's 1st-to-2nd year retention rate for participating students is higher than that of other Students of Color not participating in the program, as well as students who participate in the university honors program (Alemán & Gaytán, 2013; Valles, 2012;).

The Ethnic Studies Course

The DSP is offered under the academic sponsorship of Ethnic Studies Program and thus the first half of the course in the fall has an ethnic studies course number and is titled, "Ethnic Studies 2500: Intro to Ethnic Studies: Educational Equity for Students of Color" while the other half of the course in the spring is titled, "Ethnic Studies 3730: Students of Color Navigating a Predominantly White Institute" (see Appendix B). The catalog course description states that students are provided with the tools to "examine the social, political, economic, and historical context of schooling for Students of Color in K–12 and higher educational systems" (ETHNC 2500, Course Syllabus, Fall 2012). The students enrolled in this course are challenged to be more reflective with regard to their own educational experiences and schooling conditions (as well as those of other Students of Color) and are expected to apply the conceptualizations learned in class towards the

analysis of their Critical Service Learning experience (Course Syllabus, Fall 2012). The course introduces students to a new set of concepts and theories that break away from traditional ways of knowing. The course also allows Students of Color to better understand the educational experiences and realities of historically underrepresented college students (Course Syllabus, Fall 2012).

Under course expectations, the course recognizes its high demand of time and academic rigor for the participants as Diversity Scholars (DS, also referenced as "university mentors"). The course exposes students to short lectures, in–depth readings, films, guest speakers, and intensive yet respectful group discussions about topics, issues, and concepts such as racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, power, privilege, and whiteness, which are generally suppressed conversations within society (ETHNC 2500, Course Syllabus, Fall 2012). Due to the large number of students accepted to the program, students are divided into one of up to five sections. All sections also come together throughout the academic year; however, all classes regardless of size "integrate a pedagogical approach situated on collaborative efforts, constructivist teaching/learning process while also offering a seminar like–learning experience" (Course Syllabus, Fall 2012). The hope of such pedagogical approach speculates everyone in the class, including faculty, teaching assistants, and peer mentors, can and will contribute in various ways to bring in their personally lived experiences and expertise into the teaching/learning environment (see Appendix C for more information on the course).

Critical Service Learning Requirement

Each semester, the Diversity Scholars are asked to participate in a Critical Service Learning experience where they can choose to be university mentors for one of the four learning sites. During the years of this study the learning sites include The *Adelante* Partnership (Jackson Elementary School); Calvary Academy of excellence; The *Adelante* Partnership (Bryant Middle School) and Mestizo Arts and Activism collective (For more information on each site, refer to Appendix D). The vast majority of students are placed at the largest Service Learning site, the *Adelante* Partnership. The Diversity Scholars are asked to complete 11 Service Learning hours per semester, and receive Service Learning course credits for both the fall and spring semester. Upon the selection of a Service Learning site, students are given further information at the selected site the day of the orientation, which is held early in the semester. While all four sites provide critical experiential knowledge, for the purpose of this study, I will only be examining the engagement of the DSP alumni mentors at the local "Andrew J." Elementary School, which houses the *Adelante* Partnership[5] as that was the site I worked with directly and had a closer connection with as I had built a good relationship with the elementary students, their families, the school staff, and community overall as the Service Learning Coordinator. Additionally, the *Adelante* Partnership was the site with the highest number of mentors. Between the years, 2007-2012, there were over 500 *Adelante* mentors serving "Andrew J." Elementary School.

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[5] Professors Enrique Alemán, Dolores Delgado Bernal, and Octavio Villalpando established the Adelante Partnership at Jackson Elementary School, with the purpose of forging a stronger relationship between this Title I school, with a large population of working class Students of Color and the Intermountain University.

Critical Service Learning

The concept of Critical Service Learning (CSL) differs from the more traditional Service Learning experiences that exist at many universities (Mitchell, 2008). Within traditional Service Learning, much of literature within higher education implements the approach of *providing service to those in need* by placing university students into what seems to be an *unknown community* to teach students about "civic responsibility" (Strand et al*.,* 2003). Civic responsibility is often the term used within Service Learning to stress the importance that each student contributes and in a positive contribution to society. Many universities are beginning to implement this type of Service Learning on their campuses. Service Learning's main focus is in identifying local, yet disconnected, communities of color to create partnerships between the *university* and the *community* (Levin, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Strand et al., 2003). The problem with this model is that from this standpoint, Service Learning continues to be lead by uncritical, Eurocentric ideologies that frame the praxis of Service Learning as being the *helping hand* to communities of color (Liable, 2000, as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2006). As a result, many students leave with a conflicting and deficit view of Service Learning.

University students from predominantly White campuses enter communities of color disconnected from the realities communities of color experience on a daily basis, and lacking an understanding of their needs, often resulting in a harmful experience for the community members as well as the university students. Unless acknowledged and discussed critically, the disconnection between students and community can have an enormously negative effect on how Service Learning is implemented outside of the classroom.

In contrast, a Critical Service Learning model pays close attention to the inequities placed on the communities served to "deconstruct systems of power so the need for service and the inequities that create and sustain them are dismantled" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 50). This model attempts to get at the core of the problem through self-reflections where students can make connections between their community experience and the course (Zivi, 1997, as cited in Mitchell, 2008).

While there is existing Service Learning literature critiquing this model as "forced volunteerism," given that in some cases university students are required to complete Service Learning hours, Mitchell (2008; 2007) focuses on reemphasizing the intentions and objectives of Service Learning. The main and most important difference between a traditional Service Learning model and a Critical Service Learning model is reciprocity. Traditional Service Learning places emphasis in meeting the requirements and individual satisfaction of the university students only while a Critical Service Learning pedagogy "brings attention to social change through dispelling myths of deficiency while acknowledging how systems of inequality function in our society" (Mitchell, 2008, p. 55). University students should not simply be engaging in Service Learning to get that feeling of satisfaction for completing their civil responsibilities as dutiful citizens, but rather made to question the existence of the inequalities they encounter throughout their Service Learning experience.

This, in turn, places emphasis and highlights the way Critical Service Learning gets introduced in the ethnic studies class within the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP). The importance of distinguishing how a Critical Service Learning model differentiates from a traditional Service Learning model serves to further support and understand the

educational inequities affecting Students of Color in connection to their service site. It becomes appropriate once considering the demographics of the Diversity Scholars and the demographics of the students they are serving through the *Adelante* Partnership. Through the ethnic studies course, the DS learn about their own K-12 education disparities and make connections to those they are currently experiencing within the Students of Color they serve. The ethnic studies course allows them to realize the continued educational injustices they experienced in K-12 and how often they bear witness to those injustices within the Students of Color they serve at their site.

The Purpose of the Study

This study involves a longitudinal analysis of the extent to which Chicanx/Latinx participating in the ethnic studies course within the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP) develop critical, racial, and social–conscious awareness during their 1st-year experience in college, first by taking into account their initial predisposition toward a race-conscious identity during their 1st year in college and then by assessing how the DSP had an influence in the student's development after college.

A fundamental premise of this study was that Chicanx/Latinx students enter college with minimal to no understanding of their own educational disparities (Villalpando & Solórzano, 2005). The majority of Chicanx/Latinx students, as well as other Students of Color, continue to come from racially segregated schools that often lack educational resources and skilled teachers who have prepared them for the academic rigor of four–year universities (Orfield, 2011; Valencia, 2015; Villalpando, 2010). Their schooling has also failed to prepare them with tools to interrogate and challenge

institutionalized racism, including the underlying assumptions that maintain their subordination. Their schools have taught them to believe in the myth of meritocracy, meaning success comes from simply working hard, and allegedly race–neutral policies that purport to operate in a level playing field where everyone who works hard derives corresponding benefits (Crenshaw, 1989). This is especially the case for Chicanx/Latinx students growing up in Utah, a predominantly White, politically ultraconservative state where over 75% of the population identifies as members of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) religion, which exerts significant influence over all of the major educational, economic, political, and social institutions (A. Solórzano, 2006).

This study provides the opportunity to examine the degree to which the DSP made a considerable difference to which the participating Chicanx/Latinx alumni developed a more racial and social consciousness about their racial/ethnic identity and how that consciousness changed their attitudes, commitment and engagement in dismantling systems of oppression. Findings further demonstrate how their exposure to the DSP environment during their 1st year in college had an impact on the Chicanx/Latinx students' academic achievement for the remainder of their college years and beyond. To do so, this study looked at the perceptions of how the DSP has helped shaped their awareness around their racial/ethnic identity and how that changed their attitudes, commitment and engagement in dismantling systems of oppression.

Significance of the Study

There are both theoretical and practical implications for enhancing our understanding of how the DSP affects the development of critical race consciousness

among Chicanx/Latinx students, and for determining the extent to which this race-consciousness translates into community-oriented involvement and socially conscious behavior after college. The findings demonstrate how the DSP exerts this type of influence, and therefore there are significant implications for curricular and pedagogical considerations as well as the underlying theoretical premises that undergird them.

As a longitudinal study on Chicanx/Latinx students, this study should broaden our theoretical and practical understanding of how this increasingly important student population is generally affected in higher education. Recognizing the benefits of placing race at the center of education, several studies have been significant in further supporting the unique and advantageous impact a 1st-year program centered on race can have on students' educational outcomes after college (Alemán & Gaytán, 2013; Delgado Bernal, Alemán, & Garavito, 2009; Hurtado, Cuellar, & Guillermo–Wann, 2011; Valencia, 2015). Moreover, the findings of this study can help inform potential practices and policies that higher education institutions can adopt to increase the success of Chicanx/Latinx college students. Therefore, a qualitative approach in which students themselves can articulate the causal impact of the DSP is a valid and significant way to contribute to research on how college impacts the college students through impactful programs such as the one analyzed in this study.

Table 1. Overview of Utah and the U.S Racial/Ethnic Population

Utah Population in Comparison to the United States Population Based on U.S. Census Bureau Report 2012		
	Utah	United States
Population 2012	2,855,287	313,914,040
Non–Hispanic or Latin@, White	79.9%	63%
Hispanic or Latin@	13.3%	16.9%
Black or African American	1.3%	13.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	2.2%	1.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.5%	0.3%
Asian and Asian American	2.2%	5.1%

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature included in this chapter serves to demonstrate existing work that has geared the direction of higher education on the need to further support the academic success of Students of Color through the implementation of race and ethnic conscious diversity programs. The literature reviewed serves a two–fold purpose. The first purpose attempts to set up the conceptual framework of the study to understand *The Educational Achievement Gap for Students of Color in Higher Education* utilizing three points, they are: 1) *The Myth of Meritocracy, Assimilation, and Deficit Thinking;* 2) *Community Cultural Wealth;* and 3) *The Benefits of Racial Diversity.* The second purpose identifies the theoretical and methodological approach explored in the study on *Improving Students of Color Academic Achievement Through Ethnic Studies,* under three sections, they are: 1) *The History of Ethnic Studies; The Controversies on Ethnic Studies Courses;* and *Why Does It Matter?; The Value Ethnic Studies Offers Students of Color*.

This study takes a closer look into how this particular ethnic studies course within the DSP falls into place with the extensive collection of literature on the leaks in the educational pipeline for Students of Color and how ethnic studies with an educational approach can further suggest the positive impact it can have in engaging Students of

Color academically (Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008; Morrell, 2002), in ways that significantly improve their academic achievement (Delgado Bernal and Alemán, *in press*). The study adds to the broader literature on the benefits of incorporating racial diversity through an ethnic studies based approach can be useful in schools for all students, but particularly Students of Color (Akom, 2011; Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; 1995; Sleeter, 2011; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2015) even after college (Chang, 2001; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Pascarella, 2006; Villalpando, 2002). The study's general focus is primarily on the significance of the freshman year of the Chicanx/Latinx Diversity Scholars participating in the program, specifically the ethnic studies course as emphasis on the benefits is well grounded in the literature.

The Educational Achievement Gap for Students of Color in Higher Education

Prior to understanding the impact the course had on 1st-year, Chicanx/Latinx undergraduates, it is important to begin by highlighting where Students of Color (SOC) stand in higher education. Note that some of the literature included in this chapter is also part of the assigned readings within the ethnic studies course. The attempt in providing this literature serves to demonstrate the existence of the educational gap to challenge the reader to be more reflective and to problematize the educational achievement conditions as applied to SOC. In laying out how the educational pipeline affects one racial/ethnic group over other(s) allows for the "so what?" transition into "why" it is important. In a study by Solórzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera (2005), the scholars found that racialized

barriers that Chicanx/Latinx students and other Students of Color face create the most significant factors behind inequities throughout the educational pipeline. Moreover, Hurtado and Carter (1997) argued that for Chicanx/Latinx students it is essential to account for the historically racialized structures, policies, and practices that have impacted the educational achievement of Chicanx/Latinx, especially as they continue to have an impact in their attainment and academic progress.

The following sections will explain how scholars have understood the problem with the educational achievement gap by underlining *The Myth of Meritocracy, Assimilation, and Deficit Thinking* which plays a critical role in the numbers. The next section is focused on literature that speaks on ways to positively change the gap by utilizing asset-based approaches such as *Community Cultural Wealth*. In summary, I include literature on *The Benefits of Racial Diversity* as the closing argument on the need to create dialogue on educational inequities under race-based curriculum for the benefit of all college students.

The Myth of Meritocracy, Assimilation, and Deficit Thinking

Among the many challenges students face is their transition to higher education (Valencia, 2015). This is due to the persuaded efforts taught in their K-12 educational experiences where their schooling faculty and staff often told them that all they have to do is work hard (McNamee, 2009). Chicanx/Latinx students are expected to assimilate to an institution and a system that does not invite their family, culture, language and values (Valencia, 2015; Valenzuela, 1999; Yosso, 2006). They enter college with the humblest belief that they, unlike their "dropout classmates," do care about their education and

further believe that others were left behind due to their own individual choice in not taking full advantage of the educational opportunities given to them (Solórzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2000). It is through this understanding that transitioning into college becomes difficult for Chicanx/Latinx students in their 1st year; they are also further unable to persist onto the 2nd year, or they are not retained, or their graduate rates drop (Kuh et al., 2008). Many critical scholars state such consequences are due to policies, programs, and curricula that contradict their ways of knowing and living (Delgado Bernal, 2009, Yosso, 2005). Yet, many higher education scholars and professionals continue to subscribe to the illusion of assimilation and meritocracy as a "best practice" for retaining college SOC, particularly Chicanx/Latinx students (Ramírez, 2014; Tinto, 1977).

The demand for U.S. social conformity, as Ramírez (2014) states, expects for SOC to "'unlearn' their 'inferior' cultures and 'learn' the ways of the majority" (p. 1057). As a result, there is an unfortunate existence of SOC who unconsciously partake in the marginalization processes of populations of color through deficit ways of thinking (Valencia, 2010), or their refusal to place race at the center (Alemán & Gaytán, 2013; Moses, 2002; Orfield, Marin, & Horn, 2005;). Moses (2002) states that the U.S. is a highly stratified society where intergenerational inequality continues to persist and is often transmitted in many institutions through allegedly race-neutral practices and policies, such inequality becomes invisible to most White Americans (who have historically benefitted from intergenerational inequality). Moses argues that it is easier to ignore systems of inequality and to rationalize one's own success as merit–based achievement when we believe that there are equal opportunities offered to "everyone." In turn, the attribution of failure among Chicanx/Latinx college students is more easily

explained as a consequence of not taking advantage of educational opportunities available before and during college (Moses, 2002).

Pearl (2011) states it is not so much an issue of SOC not being ready for school, but rather that school was not ready for them. When SOC are often told they will not succeed based on deficit thinking, than they will internalize those beliefs further reassuring their failure to school officials. Instead of relying on deficit understanding of SOC's lack of academic success, school officials should explore deeper and take accountability in improving the educational pipeline for SOC. Moreno and Valencia (2011) further support this observation through their conclusion that the myth of Chicanxs/Latinxs' indifference to the value of education can better understood when it is viewed as part of a tradition of deficit thinking where Mexican-Americans are described under the cultural stereotype alleging that their value orientations are the root cause of their social and educational problems. Much more representation of their culture as an asset is needed within education to increase their retention rates. The above literature does not speak to the influence of families. Therefore the next section is important to this study as it plays a critical role into the understanding of SOC educational trajectory and how their families affect their academic success.

Community Cultural Wealth

For many Chicanx/Latinx students, the transition from high school to college becomes a critical point in their lives (Zarate, Saenz, & Oseguera, 2011). The lack of educational success for Chicanx/Latinx has historically been attributed to their families, further resulting in familial deficit perspectives to ignore the historical and social realities

that continue to deny them access to robust educational experiences (Quijada Cerecer & Alvarez Gutierrez, 2006). Quijada Cerecer and Alvarez Gutierrez (2006) further observe that Chicanx/Latinx students have very strong connections to their families, which are reinforced and affirmed by close relationships with extended family, interdependence, cohesiveness, cooperation, and respect for parental authority.

All of these characteristics, they argue, are important cultural values that help them navigate education. Chicanx/Latinx students' families provide a major influence on their identity development, especially during their 1st year of college. In a qualitative study of 83 1st–year Latino students, Torres (2004) examined how familial influences support students' development. The study involved the voices of students from seven institutions and analyzed the impact family had on the 1st-year Latinx students. Torres (2004) concluded that for researchers and practitioners, what should be a priority is to understand how Latinx students situate their identity and conceptualize the impact cultural orientation holds on their college experience. While the article offers a generalization based on the three identified familial influences, it provides strong knowledge on the impact of familial influences in terms of identity development for 1st-year Latinx students.

Responding to Bourdieuean's cultural capital theory, which gives value to the White, middle class culture as the standard "norm" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977, as cited in Yosso, 2005), Yosso (2005) introduced an alternative term called *Community Cultural Wealth*. This concept was created as a way to challenge the traditionally held assumptions that Students of Color enter the classroom with cultural deficiencies. There are six forms of wealth, or capital, to compromise Community Cultural Wealth; they are: aspirational,

navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital. Yosso (2005) explains how these are everyday capitals that go unacknowledged or unrecognized in higher educational institutions. For example, within aspirational capital, many Students of Color express how despite their educational inequities, they still hold "hopes and dreams" through high educational aspirations. In terms of linguistic capital, Students of Color incorporate various languages and communication skills that they bring with them to their college environment such as storytelling as it allows students to tell about their lives before arriving to college. Furthermore, familial capital is to reference the social and personal human resources they enter with prior to their college environment to draw from those extended familial and community networks. Social capital is referred to the students "peer and other social contacts" utilized to gain access to college and navigate social institutions. In correlation comes the navigational capital, which is the students' skills and abilities gained through various form that empower them to survive and learn how to navigate "social institutions" including educational spaces not intended to serve them. Lastly, resistance capital is found in the experiences of communities of color. This capital may come from parents, community members and the recognition of historical legacy of resistance that have prepared Students of Color on social inequities.

In another study, Torres and Baxter Magolda (2004) rely on cognitive development as a way to measure the relationship between cultural identity and the influence of family. Findings indicate ethnic identity is positively influenced when Chicanx/Latinx students reconstruct social knowledge. Therefore, it is critical to provide Chicanx/Latinx students with survival mechanisms to persevere in higher education. As Quijada and Alvarez (2006) point out, family resources and contexts need to be

acknowledged and valued in school settings. Within this research, the findings of this study can be extended to include engaging university Students of Color with communities and schools that predominantly serve Students of Color to fulfill the same purpose of preserving Chicanx/Latinx' identity during college. Moreno and Valencia (2011) further recognize that higher education has always been important to all Americans, but especially to African American and Latinx parents as they view it as a way to help change the structural conditions that perpetuate poverty.

Throughout the study, I make reference to Yosso's (2005) *Community Cultural Wealth* to understand the experiences of the Diversity Scholar alumni. Utilizing Yosso's six-part concept model was critical as it further allowed me to frame and analyze how students spoke about their experiences prior, during, and after college. I reference this model as it is similar to the Diversity Scholars Program in that it takes on a strengths-based perspective to capture the experiences the Students of Color bring with them to their college environment. Furthermore, such findings may serve to further support the major influence the students' families and culture play in their academic achievement (Perez-Huber, 2009; Villalpando & Solórzano 2005; Yosso 2005)

The Benefits of Racial Diversity

> "*…si no sabes de donde vienes, no sabes a donde vas"*
> (If you don't know where you come from, you don't know where you are going)
> -Castellanos, Gloria, & Kamimura, 2006, p. xxiii

In attempt to further suggest how programs such as the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP) can have an impact on Chicanxs/Latinxs, this next section demonstrates a larger context on the benefits of campus wide racial diversity. So how is the DSP related

to racial diversity? The objective in creating a program such as the DSP was intended out of the need to fill in the educational achievement gaps for Students of Color, which meant breaking away from traditional pedagogies that take on dominant discourse often inapplicable for SOC. As a way to offer a new pedagogy to best address student's needs, I incorporate Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005) as it offers a more asset based approach to improve SOC's academic success. Now, I include literature on racial diversity as a way to further support the existence of programs such as the DSP.

In exploring the impact the DSP had on the Chicanx/Latinx students, conversations on the benefits of racial diversity can further serve to promote how an academic enrichment program that is meant to address retention and graduation of SOC can also offer racial diversity in greater numbers. Solórzano, Villalpando, and Oseguera (2005) directly challenge U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's 2003 statement on the myth of race neutrality, where she argued that in 25 years "race will no longer play a factor in the educational experiences and conditions of Students of Color" (p. 273). We are halfway to the 25-year sunset clause she proposed, and yet it is fair to say that very few of the educational inequities that existed when she made her statement have been eradicated. Race and racism remain as important factors for determining the educational attainment and success of Students of Color in the U.S. At the same time, U.S. educational institutions have served as vital platforms for implementing various beneficiary programs, which active social change has shaped (Ramírez, 2014).

Indeed, the opportunity for Chicanx/Latinx to interact with other Chicanx/Latinx is an essential factor that can contribute to their success during college. Villalpando (2003) found that when Chicanx students attend predominantly White institutions, and associate

with a Chicanx peer group, they are able draw from their cultural resources to mitigate racialized barriers that universities create. Conversely, when White students associate with Chicanx, they too are found to benefit from such interactions. Working with a national sample of 200 Chicanx students and 200 White students, Villalpando (2003) took a closer look at the term *racial balkanization* to challenge the allegation that Students of Color "self–segregate" from the predominantly White student body and create a racial and social division between themselves and White students resulting in a negative impact on their education. The study defined *racial balkanization:* a form of expression to state the creation of separation based on race, as a myth that racist ideologies developed to strategically create terms that benefit only White students. Using *counterstories* as a way to speak back to dominant discourses, Villalpando (2003) validated the voices of Chicanxs as they shared how they could navigate and survive college by associating with their peers of color. Such finding supports the idea that when Students of Color associate with other Students of Color, they are doing it as a form of self–preservation as it allows them to support one another and validate their experiences while living in "an environment that operates in contradictory ways, by both oppressing and marginalizing [Students of Color] while offering the potential for empowerment and emancipation" (p. 636). Therefore, Students of Color who socialize with other Students of Color become more inclined to embrace their identity as People of Color and use that knowledge to pursue their education and become more likely to return and serve their communities' after college (Villalpando, 2003). This research can be helpful in understanding the impact the DSP can have on Chicanx/Latinx students as they are engaging with members of their own racial/ethnic group and other Students of Color, fostering self–preservation. This major finding helps

one understand why Students of Color self–preserve with each other as a way to survive and thrive in an often-hostile environment.

Basic assumptions of this study are that Chicanx/Latinx students benefit from and provide a benefit to colleges and universities. Smith et al. (2000) and Villalpando (2002) have argued that there are tangible educational and other social "benefits" of racial diversity in institutions of higher education, and that a racially diverse college environment also benefits higher education. They believe that racial diversity is not only an individual benefit, but also an institutional benefit. Schmoll and Moses (2002) and Harper and Hurtado (2007) further argue that racial diversity is essential, as it will prepare future members of society to be included into a healthy democracy.

Correspondingly, if current university policies and practices primarily benefit White students, the overall potential of well-prepared college graduates to contribute to social and economic development will diminish, just as the nation's racial diversity continues to grow.

The benefits of racial diversity in higher education constitute an important dimension of this study because of the consistent attacks on race–conscious admissions policies, which continue up to the present (see Fisher v. University of Texas, U.S. Supreme Court decision [2012]). Race–based affirmative action practices in college admissions have been challenged since the Regents of the University of California v. Bakke U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1978, and continuing through the Grutter v. Bollinger 2003 U.S. Supreme Court case. The continuing need to actively maintain race–conscious educational admissions policies and practices serves as the first part in creating spaces for programs such as the DSP to help Students of Color navigate White

institutions.

Improving Students of Color Academic Achievement Through Ethnic Studies

The History of Ethnic Studies

Ethnic studies[6] education grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s that African Americans started, along with other ethnic groups who sought to further secure civil rights for their respective communities. One of the major goals of the civil rights movement of the 1960s was to eliminate discrimination in education. The movement had a tremendous influence on all ethnic groups who began demanding that schools and educational institutions reform their curricula so that they could reflect the experiences, histories, cultures, and perspectives of People of Color (Banks, 1997). Communities of color, and specifically college Students of Color, demanded that their institutions implement ethnic studies curricula.

The civil rights movement would be the beginning of the continuing struggle among college Students of Color, ethnic studies educators, and supporters to demand ethnic studies curricula. According to Banks' (1997) statement on the history of ethnic studies "courses and programs were developed without the thought and careful planning needed to make them educationally sound or to institutionalize them within the

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[6] For the purpose of defining the term, Banks (2008) provides a glossary definition of ethnic studies as "The scientific and humanistic study of the histories, cultures, and experiences of ethnic groups within the United States and in other societies" (p.134). Additionally, Ramírez (2014) defines it as the "study of race-a broad and mutable category in and of itself- and power…questing for social change" (pp. 1059-1060).

educational system" (p. 5). I argue this was not so much the case but rather, when ethnic studies was first proposed, it was not considered or foreseen as a potential threat in disrupting dominant discourses. It was when Students of Color were doing well academically and enjoying school that it became a threat. Educational teaching in the U.S. is so well-structured on what students should be learning that it becomes a threat when it goes against the Eurocentric structural establishment understood as the only way of learning.

Therefore, created under the civil rights movement, ethnic studies continues to be under attack whether it is in higher education or K-12 settings. It has been over 45 years since the creation of ethnic studies departments as part of the civil rights movement. Some scholars agree that the history of ethnic studies courses has demonstrated and proven to have an impact on the social and cognitive outcomes of empowering Students of Color (Winkler-Morey, 2010). But just as King's quote, "content of character" has been used, abused, and taken out of context, so has the history of ethnic studies, as it has been disfigured by many antiethnic studies individualists who would rather keep things under a Eurocentric, male-dominant curriculum (Grant & Sleeter, 1997; Winkler-Morey, 2010).

It was college student movements that led communities of color to demand recognition and take control of what is taught in their own community schools. While there are a few ethnic studies programs in existence in K-12, when explored, such programs are often challenged, misunderstood, and under-resourced (Marable, 2000). Such threats to remove ethnic studies courses arise from the fear of teaching Students of Color to be "anti-American" revolutionaries (Palos et al., 2011).

The Controversies on Ethnic Studies Courses

A misconception behind ethnic studies courses is that it "encourages Students of Color to view themselves as oppressed and further leaves them to become dependent on expensive social services, rather than individual initiative" as Horne, the former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated when he was campaigning for House Bill 2281 (Winkler-Morey, 2010, p. 53). More recently in the 21st century, ethnic studies courses have become a larger threat to educational institutions (Ramírez, 2014), as in the state of Arizona where they completely banned ethnic studies courses, among other race based courses, particularly Chicano studies in K-12 public education.

The former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Arizona Attorney General, Tom Horne developed Arizona's House Bill 2281, which declared the removal of any courses or classes within school districts and charter schools that promoted "resent or hate other races or classes of people" (p. 2). This bill took effect December 31, 2010. Just like that, all ethnic studies courses were removed from school districts in the state of Arizona because they were considered a threat. Neither the voices of the students, community, teachers, nor the increasing number of Students of Color graduating high school helped to change the minds of educational representatives and state leaders. The argument about how it was creating anti-American citizens as it was politically indoctrinating the students through an excessive focus on the subject of race was enough to shut down the whole statewide Mexican-American studies curriculum back in 2014 in the state of Arizona. In an attempt to resolve the issue, the State Board of Education put a call for textbooks on the subject on Mexican-American studies and gave local districts the option to implement them in their courses independently. However, only one textbook

was submitted: Two lead authors published it who had no formal experience in the field of Mexican-American studies causing further damage to students' ways of learning (Planas, 2016).

Within the state of California, after the Ethnic Studies Now Coalition attempted several efforts, José Lara, a Los Angeles educator and organizer, finally celebrated the passage of the bill to institute ethnic studies in high schools across the state. It is through California's passing of the ethnic studies bill that there is hope for other states to take on this bill within their school districts. There is a growing body of literature that further states ethnic studies can serve "to engage an increasingly diverse student body by drawing on texts written by authors of color, focusing on the historical experiences of America's communities of color and introducing students to the critical study of race" (Planas, 2016).

However, within other states around the country where the number of People of Color is growing, the controversies about these types of courses continues to be questioned and argued. Even at the college level as the AVPED stated, such programs are accused of "ghettoizing" Students of Color, as referenced in Chapter 1. The controversies behind these types of courses argue for the lack of "deconstructive" or "dismantling" power of these departments in academia and are often accused of doing more damage than good for Students of Color. For example, when stating the development of an ethnic studies course would "ghetto[ize]" Students of Color, it demonstrates the uneducated perception implied as a bad thing for the term ghetto is often used to reference a section of a city or location as a slum, often occupied by underserved populations. Therefore, the development of the ethnic studies course implicated learning about their cultures and

communities as bad, undervalued, and not worth being embraced. These assumptions, among many other assumptions on the impact of ethnic studies courses, have not changed (Palos et al., 2011), even with numerous research studies that demonstrate the benefits ethnic studies courses have on Students of Color. This misrepresentation is what causes supporters of ethnic studies programs to continue pushing and demanding ethnic studies curricula even more to reconsider the growing number of literature that states the value ethnic studies programs can offer Students of Color.

Why Does It Matter?: The Value Ethnic Studies Offers Students of Color

There are a growing number of students, including White students, who have benefited and improved their academic performance and educational outcomes by taking ethnic studies courses (Hurtado, 2001; Milem, 2003; Ramírez, 2014). Yet, misleading interpretations have led to question the existence of ethnic studies as a segregated component that cannot be integrated within the boundaries of mainstream curricula. On the contrary, there is research that states, "such a dichotomy between school curricula and lived experience contributes to student alienation and a widening of the opportunity gap" (Winkler-Morey, 2010, pp. 53-54). The misconception of one acknowledging and embracing their culture while living in America is often portrayed as not being proud of the American culture and therefore dismissed as a bad thing. It is these deficit beliefs that continue to infect the minds of many Americans and their children further contaminating future generations using disguised attacks such as terrorism and immigration.

The ongoing struggle to continue supporting the implementation of ethnic studies within K-12 and higher education remains. Therefore, ethnic studies serves as an

advocate of hope for students to develop more respect for ethnic groups and to commit to working towards improving the group's status in society. More specifically, for Students of Color, ethnic studies provide what Freire (1970) called a “critical consciousness.” Ramírez (2014) further supports the idea of developing critical consciousness as she shares how ethnic studies helped her “unlearn what [she] had learned as an undergraduate…ethnic studies gave [her] the freedom and tools to do so” (p. 1059). This was a common understanding within all the DS. They all shared how the course provided the language to conceptualize their educational experiences rather than take blame among them.

> Students of Color experience racism; and ethnic study does not introduce them to that concept. Rather, by taking racism and culture seriously, ethnic studies attempt[s] to give students the tools to navigate racially hostile systems, tools that serve many of them well both within and beyond educational institutions. (Ramírez, 2014, p. 1060)

Ramírez (2014) argues that for those in favor of ethnic studies it represents the promise of education to transform individuals and society alike while for opponents it is simply considered a subject that produces bad outcomes (Ramírez, 2014). More recently, ethnic studies has undergone a renovation that foregrounds and interrogates intersectionalities, the articulation of multiple social categories and relationships (Ramírez, 2014).

The above literature is critical as it allows me to address the problem, which is the educational gap among Chicanx/Latinx college students’ success to conceptualize the need for programs such as the DSP. One way of recognizing the need for these programs is to understand concepts such as *Community Cultural Wealth* as it presents SOC with more self-(re)affirming ways of exploring who they are while also incorporating their language, family, community, and culture, among many other self-identified values

otherwise not recognized in educational spaces. The DSP is informed by an asset-based understanding of the SOC it enrolls. It refuses to rely on outdated, deficit, and racist understandings of why SOC do not succeed at the same rate as their White peers. The DSP recognizes the knowledge SOC bring into the classroom and their contributions in higher education. The DSP also validates the importance of same-race peer groups to be successful and overcome the institutional racism they will face in higher education. The DSP acknowledges the fact that SOC need same-race peer groups to succeed and overcome the institutional racism they will face in higher education. These are all concerns that this study further recognizes and they are expressed through student voices.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Framework

The primary purpose of this study is to qualitatively examine how Chicanx/Latinx students reflect on their participation in the 1st-year DSP and its influence on their sociocultural awareness and academic journey. When stating "1st year" of the program, it can mean various things such as it being their 1st year in college, their 1st year participating in a retention program or their 1st year taking an academic enrichment program. I refer to the "1st year" of their college experience as a critical starting point where Students of Color must enter a racially/ethnically diverse academic enrichment program that recognizes that their college retention starts in the 1st year. This study takes on a case study approach, as it examines a particular program within a classroom of learners (a bounded system) on the basis of uniqueness and academic success of the DSP as my unit of analysis (Merriam, 2009).

Drawing from established research in the field of higher education that suggests students do change *during* and *after* college, it is the uncertainty of *how-so,* that motivates this study. Interested in digging deeper, Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) asked whether such changes result out of natural maturational stages students undergo while in college, or if such transformations are a result of particular environments they

were exposed to *during* college. This study attempts to demonstrate how the ethnic studies curriculum and Critical Service Learning elements of a 1st-year retention program impact first-generation Chicanx/Latinx students. Particularly when attending a predominantly White campus, this study looks at how it impacts in the development of new and enduring characteristics, values, and attitudinal changes. The dimensions of the impact are drawn from the ways Chicanx/Latinx undergraduates who participated in the Diversity Scholars Program narrate their educational experiences 5 to 7 years after enrolling in college and participating in the DSP. As such, this study asks the Chicanx/Latinx Diversity Scholars to reflect on their K-12 experience, their 1st year in the DSP, and after their 1st year in college and in the program, to make sense of where they are today and where they are 5 to 7 years after their freshman year to determine whether the DSP had any impact on the remainder of their college years as a result of what they were exposed to during their 1st year in college.

In the next sections, I map out the methodology for collecting and analyzing the interviews from the Chicanx/Latinx Diversity Scholars. To begin, I provide an overview of Critical Race Theory and LatCrit to demonstrate how they frame my interpretation of the racialized experiences and intersectionalities Chicanx/Latinx students bring into higher education. Next, I describe and contextualize the case study of the Diversity Scholars Program at IMU. I then outline the methodological approach, framework, and methods used for the interviews and focus group of the Chicanx/Latinx students in the Diversity Scholars Program.

A Critical Race Theory and LatCrit Theory Lens

This study utilizes both Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latina/o Critical Theory (LatCrit) to organize the analysis, and center the voices of Students of Color, particularly Chicanx/Latinx students as holders and creators of knowledge (Delgado Bernal, 2009). CRT and LatCrit provide a better understanding of how their participation in the DSP influenced the development of their critical consciousness, cultural awareness, and thus their academic success and achievement in college. Furthermore, the utilization of CRT and LatCrit theory provided an understanding of the theoretical tools needed to include the perspective of Chicanx/Latinx university students as assets within higher education institutions by placing race at the center of analysis (Alemán, 2009; Parker, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Originally a theoretical framework in law (Critical Legal Studies), Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) introduced Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education "as an analytic tool for understanding school inequity" (p. 48). Since Ladson-Billings and Tate first wrote about this framework in the field of education, the scholarship of CRT has grown and built on the ideas of Critical Legal Studies (CLS). CRT uses historical and current perspectives of race, racism, and Whiteness to deconstruct inequities in social structures such as educational policy and the school system. Solórzano (1997) defines at least five main tenets of Critical Race Theory in Education:

> 1. *The Intercentricity of Race and Racism*: Critical Race Theory argues that race and racism are endemic in American society. Research that uses a CRT framework centers its arguments on the social construction of race and its intersections (class, gender, sexuality) have been used as a mechanism to oppress individuals of color.
>
> 2. *The Challenge to Dominant Ideology*: CRT problematizes dominant ideologies, such as race neutrality, colorblindness, liberalism, and meritocracy,

arguing that these concepts are used to maintain power and privilege of the dominant group.

3. *The Commitment to Social Justice*: Critical Race Theory in education is grounded in social justice and "views education as a tool to eliminate all forms of subordination and empower oppressed groups—to transform society" (Yosso, 2006, pp. 7).

4. *The Centrality of Experiential Knowledge*: CRT views the experiential knowledge of People of Color as valid and legitimate. It acknowledges that People of Color have a "unique voice" as their experiences differ from the dominant population's. According to CRT this form of knowledge can be found in various types of data including folk songs, counterstorytelling, and oral traditions.

5. *The Interdisciplinary Perspective*: Critical Race Theory understands that oppression comes from various forms of discrimination, and utilizes an interdisciplinary and historical approach to examine racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc.

It is important to note that these are guiding principles of CRT and but they are not static. Together, these tenets of Critical Race Theory in education illuminate the way that race and racism play a role in everyday educational practices and policies, even when they are said to be race-neutral. The above CRT tenets also encompass the main components of a theoretical framework that examines race, history, experiential knowledge, interdisciplinary, and praxis. CRT is based on the belief that issues of race continue to be prevalent in U.S. society. A dominant assumption in this country is that race no longer matters, that after the gains accomplished by the civil rights movement there is no need to focus on race. However, "[t]he very notion that race no longer matters is part of an ideology that justifies and legitimates racial inequality" (Zamudio, Russel, Rios, & Bridgeman, 2011 p. 3). By using a historical lens, critical race theorists can bridge how racial inequality from the past has informed our current reality partaking after the 2016 election which demonstrated how racism, sexism, homophobia, among other -

isms are still embedded in society. Stemming from CRT are variations of the theory to fit specific ethnic or gendered groups such as LatCrit, AsianCrit, FemCrit, TribalCrit, and WhiteCrit. Using such framework allows different ethnic or gendered groups to analyze issues central to their experiences such as language, immigration policies, and in some cases, privilege. Thus, a CRT framework specifically analyzes the racialized and gendered experiences of People of Color, shining light on systemic racial inequity.

Latina/o Critical Theory

LatCrit foregrounds race and racism to challenge traditional (i.e., hegemonic White) discourses that have sought to explain the experiences of Students of Color through a deficit lens (Alemán, 2009; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2002). In particular, a LatCrit lens centers the experiences of Chicanx/Latinx students (Solórzano, Villalpando & Oseguera, 2005, Yosso, 2005) to counteract educational assumptions often placed on them (Mertens, 2012; Solórzano et al*.,* 2005; Solórzano & Villalpando, 2005; Yosso, 2005) by embracing and validating their personal narratives through the use of counterstories (Delgado, 1989; Yosso, 2005, 2006). Counterstories are a form of understanding the multiple layers Students of Color face based on "race, gender, class, immigration status, surname, phenotype, accent, and sexuality" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 25). Acknowledging that there is no such thing as the Student of Color experience (Anzaldúa, 2007), it becomes critically important to include the multiple layers and epistemologies Students of Color carry as a way to inform the complexities experienced in their daily lives (Delgado Bernal, 2006).

Therefore, by uniting the two theories, a CRT/LatCrit lens allows for the

interrogation of current methodological praxis by understanding and bringing forward the voices of those who have been historically oppressed (Anzaldúa, 1987). The CRT/LatCrit lens provides context by paying close attention to past discrimination of Chicanxs/Latinxs, such as how they have historically been targeted within courts and institutions, and connects that with present day effects (Parker, 2003). For Chicanxs/Latinxs, there is no doubt they hold multiple truths, realities, and concerns that have been ignored and/or do not account for race, culture, and language (Parker & Lynn, 2002). Furthermore, CRT/LatCrit draw from and encourage the use of written or spoken storytelling and narratives (Delgado, 1989; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2006) of racially marginalized students to speak back about their experiences on predominantly White campuses (Parker, 1998). DeCuir and Dixson (2004) further state that counterstorytelling allows marginalized voices to challenge, expose, and critique normalized discourses that continue to perpetuate racism in society (Chandler & McKnight, 2009).

Acquiring a CRT and LatCrit lens in education allows for the engagement of societal and transformational pedagogies (Tierney, 1993) to analyze how current policies, programs, and practices are used to subordinate, marginalize, and further implicate the success of Chicanx/Latinx students in college (Villalpando, 2004). A CRT and LatCrit theory lens as a methodological approach can be emancipatory in nature through the involvement of People of Color (Lynn, 1999). Particularly important to such involvement is analyzing the educational inequalities Chicanx/Latinx undergraduate students face in the U.S. (Solórzano, Villalpando & Oseguera, 2005). Giving value to all defining tenets of CRT in education, this study highlights the fourth tenet, which “insists on recognition

of the experiential knowledge of People of Color and our communities of origin in analyzing society" (Valencia, 2015). In other words, this study utilizes counterstories as a way for the DSP participants to share their educational experiences and further highlight their experiential knowledge.

Counterstories are told through the voice of those in marginalized groups and provide a truth that is widely left unheard in dominant discourses. These stories reveal how daily occurrences can negatively impact People of Color. They contrast majoritarian stories, which tell the experiences of those with more privileged social and economic backgrounds (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009; Yosso, 2006). Ladson-Billings (2009) says, "[s]tories by People of Color can catalyze the necessary cognitive conflict to jar dysconscious racism" (p. 24). Critical Race Theory understands that racism is systemic and that some may not realize when and how they benefit from racist practices. Solórzano and Yosso (2009) argue that counterstorytelling does not solely have to focus on countering majoritarian stories, however it could be used as a tool for strengthening "traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance" (p. 139). Using counterstories to tell the experiences of People of Color serves a threefold purpose: First, counterstories provide an avenue to uncover racist practices; second, counterstories can be used as a tool for healing from the wounds of racial oppression; and third, counterstories can serve as a catalyst for change and empowerment. More importantly, counter-narratives allow for people of historically marginalized backgrounds to "name their own reality," which not only empowers an individual and/or community but also creates effective dialogue on race, class, and gender (Zamudio et al., 2011).

The utilization of both CRT and LatCrit allow me to answer my research

questions and examine how the Diversity Scholars understand their experiences and involvement in this unique 1st-year experience program as it correlate to their academic success and achievement. A CRT/LatCrit lens serves to challenge traditional student development theories by arguing that it is more than just providing access to what has been inaccessible. A CRT/LatCrit lens recognizes that "there are larger racial and social–class gaps" (Karen & Dougherty, 2005, p.47) that society can admit to and therefore an educational solution can begin by addressing the aspirations of Students of Color.

Conceptual and Analytical Design

In this study, I apply Astin's (1993) conceptual model of Input-Environment-Output (I–E–O) assessment to assess the impact of college, and the impact of different experiences in college, on students. Unlike traditional integration models (see: Tinto, 1987) that argue students enter college with an empty vase of knowledge ready to be filled, Astin's model proposes that to understand the relationship between a university environment and student outcomes, researchers must take into account the inputs — meaning knowledge, values, experiences, and goals, students already bring with them — as they begin attending the university. Recognizing the I–E–O model may appear overly simplistic, the way I applied it in this study was fairly complex. The letter ***I*** (for input) is another form of gathering critical data, such as student demographics, background, family characteristics, values, inspirations, and previous education experiences; the ***E*** (for environment) includes the range of experiences encountered during college, and the ***O*** (for outcomes) refers to the characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that students develop after college (Dixon, Franklin–Craft & Washington, 2013; Pascarella &

Terenzini, 2005). In many ways, the I–E–O model is a transformative analytical tool. The model also points out that students' inputs are thus critical as they relate to both outputs and the environment; and in turn, inputs can affect the observed relationship between environments and outputs (Astin, 1993). For example, in gathering the I (Inputs), I referenced their K-12 experiences prior to their 1st year in college to understand the knowledge they entered with from the E (Environment), I asked the students questions regarding to their experience in the ethnic studies course and the DSP overall. The O (Outputs) is where I asked deeper questions regarding their experiences after their 1st year in the program. For example, I asked: Did they take other ethnic studies courses after their 1st year, did they have other faculty of color, and did they change their majors as a result of the DSP? These questions help me understand the impact the DSP course had on them and if the students developed a critical consciousness from the course based on the knowledge they had prior to and after the ethnic studies course. This concept allows me to understand how being exposed to a particular experience during college, such as the DSP, can have an impact on the remainder of their college and beyond.

As mentioned within the literature review, this study focuses solely on Chicanx/Latinx students in higher education since they are the highest in terms of population, but lowest in educational retention. I explore their experiences prior to college because, as Anderson (2002) states, "to fully understand the increased participation of Students of Color in American higher education, it helps to begin with high school completion rates and then proceed to analyze college participation rates" (p. 12). This is critical because such growth of Chicanx/Latinx students enrolling at 4-year

institutions is expected to increase, shifting the face of higher education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006; Valencia, 2015); it is critical to understand students' prior schooling experiences and background characteristics (inputs) as a way of better understanding their college experience and attainment.

Methods: Research Questions, Approach, and Rationale

The principal purpose of this study was to explore the influence that a particular environment, the Diversity Scholars Program, had on the development of new and enduring characteristics as well as values and attitudinal approaches that demonstrate a critical consciousness among Chicanx/Latinx undergraduates. The study involved a longitudinal analysis of the extent to which Chicanx/Latinx' critical consciousness changed during college from their participation and exposure unlearning traditional ways of knowing within an ethnic studies course under the DSP.

Research Questions

The following questions guide this study:

1. How do Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in the *Diversity Scholars Program* (DSP) describe their experience and involvement in the program, 5 to 7 years after enrolling in it (presumably at or near graduation)?
2. How do students who participated in DSP describe its influence on their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and social consciousness?
3. In what ways did the DSP nurture or empower Chicanx/Latinx students' academic success and achievement?

The study utilized a qualitative research approach, as I was interested in understanding the *process* by which Chicanx/Latinx students' developed a greater racial/ethnic self–awareness and how the DSP contributed to that process. Astin (2012) advises the qualitative investigator to consider the possible contribution of inputs and the environment to gain a more in–depth explanation. Specifically, my ultimate interest was on the process by which the Diversity Scholars Program, via the ethnic studies course, influences students' critical consciousness. The study can also inform the impact the DSP can carry after the 1st year of college and beyond college.

Historically, both quantitative and qualitative research claimed the rationale for their study was "born out of concern to understand the 'other'" (Vidich & Lyman, p. 38 as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) meaning "the dark–skinned Other to the White world" (Denzin & Lincoln, p. 1). It was understood that the term researcher was tied to a Western White male identity and further represented the colonizer (Smith, 1999, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) as the one with the "colonial knowledge" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Consequently, this implied that the researcher/colonizer reserved the right to claim accuracy based on his interpretation and descriptions of those he studied "under the guise of authority" (Villenas, 1996, p. 713).

However, even within a qualitative approach, some qualitative scholars would argue there is no longer a serious need to defend qualitative research as much as in early research (when one felt obligated to do so) since today there have been several new ways of doing qualitative work (Merriam, 2009; Wolcott, 2009). Regardless, one thing qualitative researchers can agree on is how it is no longer a matter of understanding the "other" as much as it is understanding the researcher in–depth and their rationale for their

research. Marshall and Rossman (2006) state that understanding the design and methods of a qualitative study is just as complex and that a fundamental part lies not only on placing careful consideration on the setting, site, population, or phenomenon of interest, but also giving consideration to understanding the role of the researcher as she/he is the fundamental instrument when doing qualitative research. However, there are a growing number of qualitative scholars who agree on conventional qualitative approaches and do not permit the inclusion of racially diverse interactions (Dance, Gutiérrez, & Hermes, 2010).

Within traditional quantitative and qualitative studies, researchers continue to be seen as knowledge holders entering what they often identify as unknown communities and often would rely on their "commonsense" constructs (Anderson, 1989, p. 254; Valencia, 2015). Butler (1990) states, "we are held captive by a master narrative of identity" when doing traditional research on the 'other'" (as cited in Bloom, 1999, p. 331). Even more problematic is when outside researchers enter sites without understanding the cultural, genealogical, and local knowledge further infringing on individual, family, or group ownerships rights which lead to inappropriate interpretations of the communities (Lomawaima, 2000).

Research Design

Context of the Diversity Scholars Program as the Environment

The DSP course is entitled, "*Intro to Ethnic Studies: Educational Equity for Students of Color with a Designation."* The DSP engages students in critical theories to improve their educational persistence, retention, and leadership opportunities through

community engagement. As a race-based ethnic studies course with a nontraditional Critical Service Learning component, the DSP examines educational and social injustices by critiquing structures of opportunity from the perspectives of those often marginalized from them (Marshall & Rossman 2006; Pizzaro, 1998). DSP draws on studies of colleges, students, and related subject matter to help students better understand how the theoretical and epistemological analysis covered in the course might apply to their immediate collegiate environment.

The DSP is organized as a two-course sequence aimed at introducing a set of concepts and theories from which to better understand the educational experiences and realities of historically underrepresented students (Fall 2012 course syllabus). Through the course, students are familiarized with poetry, short stories, narratives, critical essays along with "empirical research that examines the social, political, economic, and historical context of schooling for Students of Color in U.S. K-12 and higher educational systems. More specifically, the course is intended to enable students to:

1. Develop an understanding of the histories, concepts, perspectives, and theories for examining the complex realities of historically underrepresented students;
2. Articulate their understanding of concepts such as meritocracy, microagressions, social justice, resistance, agency, and activism, and to apply these concepts to their personal educational experiences and to the on-going public debate over educational (under) achievement, equity, and the politics of education;
3. Engage in interethnic/racial dialogues about race and racism, the use of

power and privilege to institutionalize inequity, methods for achieving social and educational change, and the practice of leadership and activism in educational and community settings; and

4. Make connections between theory and practice by engaging in a Service Learning experience that draws upon the experiences and identities of Students of Color and allows students to explore and reflect on their own identities along with those of others.

Since its inception, the course has had many revisions to continuously update the readings, better accommodate the disciplinary perspectives of new instructors, and to incorporate feedback and reviews from former professors, advisors, peer mentors and students who have taught, assisted, and or taken the course. Since the number of students enrolled in the course can range each year from 70 to 120, the AVPED and Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies directors have worked with the DSP faculty coordinator to identify the number of new faculty needed to teach the course. There have been between three and five professors teaching this course on a yearly basis whose scholarship is "dedicated to critical race-and gender-based pedagogies aimed at empowering Students of Color" (Alemán & Gaytán, 2013). All professors range in fields such as Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, Educational Leadership and Policy, Education and Cultural Studies, and Communications, among other fields. While each professor is assigned their own students and classroom, all the professors work diligently with one another prior to the semester to create an academically rigorous syllabus while also meeting an hour prior to each class to reflect and update one another on their students educational journey in the class and at their Critical Service Learning sites.

On the 1st day of class, students have a clear understanding of the demanding requirements of the course, which includes short lectures, assigned readings, films, guest speakers, and intensive group discussions about topics, issues, and concepts that are often very difficult to address such as racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, power, and privilege.

Critical Service Learning Component

The Critical Service Learning component of DSP includes a four-unit Service Learning designation where students are required to complete 1 hour per week for 11 weeks for each semester at one of four Service Learning sites. Every year, for a class of over 100 racially/ethnically diverse students, each student completes a total of approximately 22 hours of service. The DSP instructors are cognizant of the needs of the enrolled students, as many of the students come from working class backgrounds and work one or multiple jobs. Therefore, 1 hour a week for Service Learning seems to be manageable. The Diversity Scholars have the option to mentor at four various sites, one of which includes the *Adelante* Partnership where university students become mentors in serving the local yet disconnected school known as "Andrew J." Elementary School.

This study is intended to understand how Chicanx/Latinx students develop a critical consciousness through a race-based course, which provides experiential learning components that further encourage students to remain socially engaged. Therefore, the study takes on a qualitative methods approach and utilizes Astin's (1993) (I–E–O) conceptual framework as a way to assess the impact of the DSP on Chicanx/Latinx students.

Analyzing the DSP as a case study, I collected 10 individual interviews and conducted a focus group with 5 out of the 10 Chicanx/Latinx students who have participated in the program between the 2007–2011 academic cohort years (Astin's I–E–O Model).

Population Selection: Participants

I identified the participants through various sources, such as the Office for Equity and Diversity (OED), recommendations from professors who taught the course, advisors, and coordinators in the Center for Ethnic and Student Affairs (CESA). Snowball sampling methods were used to connect with DSP alumni who I still remained in contact with through Facebook. My participation and former involvement with the 2007–2012 cohorts as the Service Learning Coordinator allowed me to identify students who fit the characteristics needed for this study. For example, I kept in contact with a few of the DSP alumni, some of whom were continuing on with an out of state master's degree. For some of these students, I relied on conducting a few of my interviews, interactions, and focus groups via Skype and Apple iPhone's Face Time.

This approach allowed me as the researcher to be up to date with today's savvy and highly technological generation where students feel more comfortable and are accessible speaking through the comfort of their own sites as many utilize technology to share and express their everyday life experiences (Silverman, 2013). I also included more traditional face–to–face interview recordings with those who were available.

Criteria for Selecting Students

As mentioned in Chapter 1, all students participating in the DSP are matched with a service site of their choice. Most students choose to mentor with the *Adelante* partnership, specifically serving at "Andrew J."[7] Elementary School located off campus, across town in a community of mostly residents of color. In selecting sites outside the university, the DSP aims to create a nontraditional space where first-generation Chicanx/Latinx students can understand the theories taught in class and apply them to their service site. Such an approach allows students to engage in critical racial dialogues by connecting what they learned in class, in connection to their Service Learning site and by validating their own K-12 educational experiences as Students of Color while attending a predominantly White institution.

This study includes the participation of 10 students who graduated from IMU and participated in the yearlong Diversity Scholars Program, some time between 2007 and 2011. The required characteristics for participation in this study include:

- Participated in the DSP between Fall 2007–Spring 2011
- Self-identified as first–generation
- 1st-year undergraduate
- Low socioeconomic status (now or growing up)
- Bilingual (English-Spanish, not fluent in Spanish for some)
- Self–identified as Chican@s/Latin@ undergraduate students
- Fulfilled their Critical Service Learning requirement as university

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[7] "Andrew J" is a pseudonym for the actual elementary school where the program resides.

mentors in the *Adelante* partnership

Researcher's Role in DSP

As the Critical Service Learning Coordinator for DSP, I worked closely with students in scheduling and coordinating the completion of their Critical Service Learning off–campus. I was very accessible to the university faculty, staff, and students, elementary school students, parents, teachers and members of the community by having an office at the elementary school and the university. Additionally, I was the *Adelante* Summer Camp Coordinator, where I organized field trips, summer camps, and community events, and was often invited to present, facilitate, and sit in class lectures, which helped me build a sense of *confianza* (trust). My former participation in the DSP classes and in *Adelante* has allowed me to identify and have some familiarity with the experiences of new and former Diversity Scholars.

Data Source

This qualitative study was be framed by a *critical theory* paradigm where I as the researcher will be guided by a Chicana feminist perspective and racialized discourse (Bloomberg & Marie Volpe, 2008). As it is essential that the participants define their experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) on their own terms, I took on a case study approach to examine a unique program. I used a *case study* approach to entail the DSP and the Chicanx/Latinx students who participated within the last 7 years since 2007. This qualitative approach allows me to understand the meaning of the *lived experiences* of Chicanx/Latinx students and further identify the core essence of their experiences as they

directly described them (Bloomberg & Marie Volpe, 2008).

Data Gathering Methods

Qualitative Data Collection

I conducted one–on–one interviews with 10 students and one focus group interview as a way to hear how the Chicanx/Latinx students speak about their experiences prior to the DSP, during, and beyond college. Once all individual interviews were completed, I contacted all participants again to see who was available and interested in participating in a follow-up focus group. This approach provided the opportunity for DSP alumni to touch base or create new relationships with one another through their shared experiences and career networking. The approach also gave me the opportunity to reach out to former DSP alumni, gaining a sense of caring, acknowledging, and validating their experiences and success. This was a way of continuing the relationship with them even after their participation in the program.

After collecting the data, I received professional and family support to transcribe all 10 interviews. For example, the first to offer to help me was my female cousin who identifies as a 34-year-old Mexican-American and Chicana, Bilingual in Spanish-English slang and born and raised in the Los Angeles area. Having no formal experience in transcribing, my cousin found this experience to be eye opening. As the first one in her family to attend a University of California, she can identify with the struggles of being a first-generation student but what was intriguing for her was hearing about the experiences of the three student interviews (Eva, Jamie, Eduardo) she transcribed in identifying as a Student of Color in a predominantly White state. Living in a state like California, where

the minorities are the majorities, she could not relate to feelings of isolation for being a Student of Color.

The second family member to help with the transcription was my younger sister, who identifies as a 26-year-old Mexican-American, Bilingual in Spanish-English slang and also born and raised in LA. Having formal experience transcribing for me before in addition to her growing up in a low resourced school and moving away to attend Cal State, I trusted her to know the language the students utilized to describe their educational journey and life situations. While she was only able to complete one transcription (Consuelo's), she felt the student shed light on many topics that educational practitioners should be aware of and stated there should be more studies conducted such as this one, as they were intriguing and filled with historical context for the future of education.

Lastly, due to my raising two kids and having a third pregnancy, I had to get additional support and another PhD candidate in my department referred me to my next transcriber. This transcriber is a 66-year-old woman who currently lives in Carmel, California. She shared how she lost her job in 2011, and as a 62-year-old found it difficult to find a job. As a formal legal secretary, she "had enough of the world of lawyers and/or corporate psychopaths" so she retired early and dedicated herself to painting until she found out she can make a decent living doing transcription work from home. That said, she knows more about "confidentiality than most" as she stated when I shared my hesitancy in having her transcribe since I value the students' voices. I was especially careful as some of the students shared their undocumented status. However, what was eye-opening for me was her description of services from Craigslist where she stated she was willing to provide a better deal to "worthwhile" transcriptions. After I contacted her

over email and gave her a brief description of my study, she immediately responded her willingness to give a better offer and shared how she had finished several interviews and oral histories with a group of local civil rights activists telling their stories for an upcoming book. Furthermore, she offered to send me a referral sheet and assured she would just transcribe without editing as I asked. With this said, I accepted her services and simply changed the name of the students to secure their privacy. Also, another concern was that some students briefly spoke in Spanish so I wanted to make sure that was in the transcription, as while she admitted she knew some Spanish, when Spanish sections came out, she made sure to highlight it for me to look over. As a 62-year-old White woman, this transcriber's inside knowledge was one in which I hope other readers are able to express. She was well organized and after each transcription, six total (Luis, Jose, Rafael, Lili, Ana & Erica), she would provide personal insight for each interview. All transcriptions brought her a much-needed insight on the experiences of Students of Color and the inequalities they faced in education. Another insight was how the course was "highly praised" by many of the students as she understood through the transcriptions and furthermore agreed that "White" students should take a separate course as to educate them on the inequalities Students of Color face. She shared how much she appreciated doing these transcriptions and how they were really educational for her as she learned a lot through them.

Overall, all three transcribers demonstrated respect for the students' transcriptions and after they submitted the transcriptions, I went over them myself to make sure everything was spelled and referenced correctly. For example, the transcribers did not know the names of the programs the students referenced as they were abbreviated so I

made those changes. However, there is nothing more accurate when transcribing than getting actual approval from the participants themselves. Shortly after I completed the transcriptions, I sent out a copy of the transcription to each participant as promised with notes and terms I utilized to organize their interviews and my interpretations of their experiences. I made sure to ask and give them time to respond if they wanted to clarify or change anything in their transcription. Also, if they wanted a pseudonym or anything for that matter, I left options open to make them feel comfortable. This allowed the students to go over the transcription word-by-word and also allowed them to take a look into how I was making sense of their interviews. If there were any questions, comments, concerns or changes needed, I asked the student participants to contact me to make the changes. This is how I personally ensured the accuracy of the transcriptions. Throughout the data collection process, organizing, and writing, I made sure to stay in touch with the participants to update them on the progress of my writing and to give them updates on my personal life, as I had given birth after the interviews and focus group.

Unfortunately, I encountered technical difficulties with recording the whole focus group. The focus group interview was held in the College of Education building at IMU. There were five participants (Luis, Eduardo, Rafael, Ana, Erica). Two of them lived in the state of Utah and remaining three had to Skype in so their time was later as they were located in the north east side of the U.S. I had water, coffee, and desserts. As the focus group was held late on a weekday, the participants were coming out of work and had to work the next day, which I was conscious of. I had checked out the recording equipment from the department's tech office. Even though they briefly explained how to use the equipment, I thought I had it down. I set up everything on time and checked the angles to

make sure everyone was coming out in the video and was recording with a sound check and all. However, what I failed to do was check if the camcorder was fully charged. Unfortunately, it was not fully charged so it did not record the entire hour and a half focus group, which started at 8:30pm and ended around 10:00pm. Fortunately, I saved the first 30 minutes of focus group interview. While there were questions I had for the focus group, they were starter questions to get the group going with a critical dialogue. Overall, my hopes in understanding where the DS are today as a result of their exposure to the ethnic studies course and their college experience after the DSP was empowering, to say the least. This approach helped me understand the impact a 1st-year Diversity Scholars Program can have on Students of Color in terms of their college experience and how it can be enriched to improve the future of the new incoming DS and their college experience.

Data Analysis Procedures

The qualitative data included open–ended interviews and a focus group. The data were then organized within data software called Hyper Research, which helped me organize each participant's transcript, take side notes, and create a data dump, which was very helpful in the end. Furthermore, Astin's I–E–O model enabled me to organize the data more effectively by arranging their experiences in temporal sequence. While the biggest challenge was organizing and analyzing the extensive data collection, the time–intensive nature of analyzing quantitative data was more difficult when it came to deciding what data to use as it was a rich data set for me and I felt it all needed to be incorporated into the study. Yet, in order to center my research questions, some data were

not included in the study.

The Researcher's Positionality

It is through the researcher's own *cultural intuition* (Delgado Bernal, 1998) that the present study is framed. Delgado Bernal defines "Cultural intuition" as "one's personal experience to include collective experiences and community memory, and points to the importance of participants' engaging in the analysis of data" (pp. 563–564). A Chicana conducting research within Chicanx/Latinx communities holds a unique understanding of the community due to her race and gender. Furthermore, recognizing the transformational education seen through my own (the researcher's) formal involvement as a teacher assistant, coordinator, and mentor to the participants, can further support how the DSP can be a new way to understand the educational experiences of Chicanx/Latinx students and provide best approaches to serve today's growing population.

For over 6 years, I was invested in giving back to my Latinx community as the mentor and coordinator for the *Adelante: A College Awareness and Preparatory Partnership*. The community I worked with became my home away from home. Considering I was away from my immediate *familia,* through my involvement in the *Adelante* partnership, the community opened doors for me and it has become the community from which I gained my strength to survive the hostile campus environment I experienced as a graduate student. My educational journey has provided ample experiential knowledge and my graduate coursework equipped me with professional capital to understand issues of inequity in education through theoretical and practical

opportunities. While I understand and acknowledge that the process to begin making policy changes that impact the way Students of Color experience higher education will be difficult, I am here today to serve university Students of Color.

Why a Chicana Feminist Lens

The incorporation of Chicana feminist thought acknowledges race as imperative. However it offers additional perspectives that take into account the many intersectionalities and other complex aspects of gender and identity among Chicanxs/Latinxs. For example, for Chicana feminist scholars, the White feminist movement against male behavior, patriarchy, and sexism did not adequately represent their struggles, as it ignored the collective struggle against racism. Anzaldúa (1999) stated, women of color do not claim to be feminist "for the fear of losing sight of the essentialized 'oppressor'–'the White man'" (Tijerina–Revilla, 2009, p.51). However, due to the exclusion of issues for women of color in the White women's movement, and the exclusion of gender issues within the Chicano movement, Chicana feminist scholars took on a U.S. Third World perspective to challenge all dominant ideas by including and validating their knowledge and lived experiences (Pérez, 1999). The work of Chicana feminist scholars has since been recognized through the inclusion of personal experiences as a way to transform the images and representations that are socially constructed about Chicanxs/Latinxs. Chicana feminist scholars share their personal experiences of discrimination and segregation due to their race, class, gender, sexuality, language, culture, community, and immigration, among many other intersections not to be interpreted as a victim, but rather how they survive in their everyday life.

This study suggests and recommends the approach of a Chicana/Latina feminist lens as an alternative to understand the lived experiences of Chicanxs/Latinxs as it relates to the field of education (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011). A Chicana feminist lens explores the crucial ways that the identities of Chicanxs/Latinxs are conceptualized. In the following paragraph, I utilize a Chicana feminist lens as an example of what it looks like to explore the experiences of Students of Color based on my own narrative.

"A body does to the land what the land does to a body"[8]

I am the first in my family to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree and a master's in education. The first time I stepped foot on campus at California State University, Monterey Bay, was 2002. Everyone was present, *mi mamá, papá,* my six *hermanitas/o,* my *tíos* and my *primo* [mom, dad, siblings, aunts and uncles and cousin]. They had all helped me pack and load the van as we headed to Monterey. The plan was to pursue a higher education for *me* to be successful in life, to leave everything behind in search of a new life path. However, little did I know that moving so far away from *mi familia* and *mi comunidad* [my family and my community] would only bring me closer to them.

In the first edition of *Borderlands/La Frontera:* The New Mestiza, Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) would best describe this experience as a *choque* (crash), a cultural

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[8] A direct quote from Cruz, C. (2006b). Toward an epistemology of a brown body. In D. Delgado Bernal, C.A. Elenes, F. Godínez, & S. Villenas (Eds.), *Chicana/Latina education in everyday life: Feminista perspectives on pedagogy and epistemology* (pp. 59-75). Albany: State University of New York Press.

collision in which a cultural Chicana undergoes the struggles of borders that come in-between both worlds and further presents the need to seek a *new mestiza* consciousness as a way "to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended" (p. 80). Growing up in Los Angeles, my parents made it a point for me to know our roots, culture, language, and what community represented for our *comunidad.* However, they also wanted the best for my siblings and me; to them it meant getting an education but they knew that to do that, I would have to leave my *comunidad* to gain access to better education. But it was that same "better education" which became deceiving for my parents and me. It encouraged me to disassociate myself from what I knew (Cummins, 1996), to abandon my roots, and instead identify as a Hispanic and assimilate (Anzaldúa, 2002) to my White peers.

Drawing from Cruz's (2006b) epistemology of the brown body, I too speak from my brown body to understand what propelled me to do my research on this particular 1st-year program for Students of Color which took place in a top-tier, predominantly White research institution. Cruz (2006b) uses Anzaldúa's concept of the *mestiza* body that is Aztlán to understand how "while it is a place scarred by history and struggle, yet engaged in building new cultures and new ways of being" (p. 63). This concept spoke to my experience as an undergraduate struggling to juggle my intersecting identities.

Furthermore, I think part of my interest in doing this study was my yearning to have a program such as the DSP when I was an undergraduate as it would have allowed me to name my experiences and realities a lot earlier. It is through my own undergraduate experience that I became interested in understanding how the DSP provided

Chicanxs/Latinxs the language to speak back to the inequitable K-12 experiences they faced prior to their 1st year in college. Furthermore, such early understanding provided them with critically conscious tools to further navigate the remainder of their years in college and beyond.

I was fortunate enough to be introduced to such language in graduate school and to name my undergraduate experiences and utilize that knowledge to strengthen the experiences of new and incoming students in higher education. Just as Cruz (2006b) states, the brown body needs to act instead of react. In listening to my brown body, I was propelled to reclaim myself as a "Chicana social agent" (Cruz, 2006b, p. 60) who stands for doing research using a race-conscious lens as it allows me to redefine and shape the experiences of Students of Color in higher education.

Ethical and Political Considerations

Trustworthiness Issues

A theoretical tool that binds all our perspectives is the result of "collective community memories that contest the legacy of colonialism and in turn seek to offer decolonizing strategies" (Delgado Bernal & Elenes, 2011, p. 102). It is these epistemologies that invite a "joint participation" between the researcher and the participants (Lather, 1986, p. 257). In terms of my position as a researcher in relation with the participants, I utilize these frameworks as it allows for participants to not feel as if our experiences are neutral but rather to validate their ways of knowing without expecting a correlation between us.

Reciprocity

> "…reciprocity implies give–and–take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power" (Lather, 1986, p. 263).

My personal commitment is to serve populations of students who are traditionally underserved and denied the opportunity in the educational pipeline. My academic endeavors have given me the opportunity to gain a better understanding of oppressed and underserved communities and how they function within a social–cultural context. Researching communities of color and their placement in society is important to me. Even though I have obtained a solid foundation in my education, I truly feel there are more research skills I need to develop to foreground the value of critical race epistemologies in education and further enlighten their racial identities as Students of Color living in underrepresented communities.

My ultimate goal is to create opportunities to instill higher education as a tangible reality in the minds of all students, especially populations that have been disregarded and underrepresented in higher education. I hope to conduct research and be engaged in communities as a method for providing opportunities for social justice transformation. This is why I felt fortunate to be part of the *Adelante* research team and the DSP. I believe in the DSP and the partnership's mission and commitment to serve underrepresented populations. Overall, both the program and the partnership have one goal in common, which is to ground the notion that each student has the potential to pursue and graduate in higher education. I offer myself as a mentor of color to all the students who will be participating in this research study as a former undergrad, graduate, and first-generation Chicana with a doctoral degree. I wish to be the supportive mentor of color who will acknowledge the challenges that come with being a student of color, but

will be there to reassure them that they belong in higher education institutions and will be there to help them navigate the often-hostile educational system.

Limitations

The other important limitation is that the 7-year postgraduation follow-up may not provide a sufficient length of time to fully assess long-term postcollege effects. With regard to this study, for example, if the follow-up had been administered 10 years rather than a few years shortly after graduation, I would be more certain of obtaining better-defined significant orientations and set career plans among the sample of respondents. Thus, while the 7-year postcollege follow-up provides a good estimate of the direction of their career plans values, I cannot be certain to what extent their plans as stated between 2007–2011 will persist in the longer term. Another concern was how far back to their 1st year in the course the students might remember.

Rationale for Qualitative Research

In conducting a qualitative approach, I include the experiences of Chicanx/Latinx undergraduate students and further hope to embrace their identities by having them critically reflect on their racialized experiences in a predominantly White campus. Ultimately, I am passionate about understanding how Chicanx/Latinx students understand their undergraduate experience and how they refer back to their communities as a source of knowledge and richness that allows them to make it through the privileged space of academia with a clear sense of their racial and cultural identity.

Significance of the Study

This investigation should enhance our understanding of how college affects the development of "critical consciousness" for Chicanx/Latinx, students and the extent to which these changes might translate into community–oriented involvement during and after college. I hope to develop a better understanding of whether a race-conscious approach may continue to affect their involvement in community services (such as Critical Service Learning), the type of service careers they pursue, and their life goals 7 years after college entry. The results will not only enhance our understanding of an under–studied racial/ethnic group participating in a uniquely diverse 1st–year program, but it will also provide important data on the long–term stability of changes that occur during the undergraduate years and beyond college.

My Journey

This study had its origin in my undergraduate belief that Chicanxs/Latinxs are often inclined to pursue postcollege "service" occupations within communities of color after being exposed to critical race conscious pedagogies and out of a sense of responsibility to improve the social conditions affecting marginalized communities. This belief was reinforced, after reflecting on my preindividual motivations for pursuing a college education, to how my overall college experience in relation with Service Learning impacted my decision to continue towards an advanced degree.

Every year in high school, I never failed to have at least one teacher, administrator, or staff advise my peers and me that education would improve our chances of obtaining a good paying job and getting out of the "ghettos." They were all referring to

the only community I had known and loved, as the place to run away from if I wanted to increase my chances of success. Such discernment is demonstrated within K-12 schools where there exist high Latinx concentrations and low number of staff and faculty who aim to provide culturally relevant academic support programs (Quijada & Alvarez, 2006). Students living in low socioeconomic communities are more often encouraged to "get out" and not turn back. So as advised in high school, I was guided through the college application process with the mindset I was moving away from home, *mi comunidad*, to better myself and get a good career. Valencia (2011) states that these types of messages, such as "make it out of the streets," that are often told by teachers and school officials, are reasons why there exists "school failure" as Students of Color are not "motivated" to better themselves as a whole community but rather at a distance from oneself and their culture. This approach insinuates that students should feel ashamed for living in what is commonly referred to as "the streets/ghettos" rather than being embracing their communities. However, deep inside I knew I was doing it for *mi familia*.

Watching my father come home late tired with cuts on his greasy arms, still smelling like car grease as I helped pull off his dirty boots, he would state, "if you don't want to come home tired and dirty like me, stay in school so you don't come home looking filthy, dirty like me." To my parents, they were so painfully willing to let go of their *hija* (daughter), the first to go to college and take on that unknown life they sacrificed for the betterment of their children, as it was believed to be crucial to the educational success of Students of Color (Moreno & Valencia, 2011; Zarate, Saenz & Oseguera, 2011). Instead, moving away from my *comunidad* drove my motivation to complete a BA and pursue a PhD, all from a personal sense of responsibility I felt

towards returning to my community.

> If these culturally enriched experiences were legitimized, learning would become a dialogical process whereby Latina/o children and youth would feel validated and encouraged to enable in the learning process. (Quijada & Álvarez, 2006, p. 9)

For Students of Color, it is not about "making it out of the streets/ghettos," where many were born and/or raised but rather the challenge of "making it out of a racist educational school system." I wanted to share all that I had learned in college with my *comunidad*. I wanted to express the importance of challenging the inculcation of school staff and administrators to leave our communities and never turn back. In other words, I learned it was not about surviving in "the streets" but rather surviving in a school system where you are treated as if you do not belong. I felt I was developing the skills and talents that could benefit our communities to be proud of who we are and where we come from and to return home as our community was anticipating.

As planned, I wanted to go back to my community and even though my career plans changed from teacher, to counselor, to principal, to professor, as I became more involved in service–oriented careers, all intentions were towards helping improve the lives of other Chicanxs/Latinxs. Zarate et al. (2011) states the college choice process for Chican@ students affect so many different aspects of their college experience from the academic and social integration to the degree attainment. As difficult as my educational endeavors were as a first-generation Chicana living 6 hours away from home, I came to the conclusion that my sense of obligation to my community sustained me along with my realization that I was among the few Chicanxs/Latinxs who had progressed this far educationally. Feeling guilty for being one of the few among my high school classmates to "make it out" only reinforced my commitment to my community and to break this

"pushed out" chain (Fine, 1991).

Now as one of the few current Chicana doctoral students in my department (which consists of mostly older White males), I have concluded, along with other Chicanx/Latinx peer groups I have networked with throughout my college years, that if it were not for the reliance of a support network of peers with similar experiences as mine, I would not have survived this far. It is as a result of my experiences *during* college that I have committed myself to improving our communities' educational pathways.

This experience provided a good part of the impetus for me to pursue this current investigation. Villenas and Foley (2011) state the experiences of Students of Color should be seen as a call for new concepts of research methodologies that recognize storytelling techniques as a way to respond back to the cultural deficit explanation of "minority school failure" (p. 175). Although somewhat unusual for a dissertation study, this personal account is meant to convey the personal significance that this study has for me. It provides an example of research conceived from "lived experience." It is within this understanding that I draw my work to speak on how Students of Color refer back to the "streets" or better yet *"our comunidades*" as a source of empowerment to continue moving forward in higher education despite several bumps on the road (Pinto, 2010). Such strength to continue in higher education regardless of the contradictions that arise for Students of Color is what drives my interest to capture their experiences in the DSP, in relation to the course, and to discover whether or not it had an influence on their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and social consciousness. Lastly, my interest in this project also comes from how the DSP/ethnic studies course may have provided these students with the tools to nurture and empower their academic achievements.

My hope is that this personal account clarifies the origin of some of the questions in this study. Based on my experience I want to explore what are other factors or mechanisms help Students of Color challenge the dominant discourse that, for example, teaches them that to succeed they must leave. In support of the AVPED's original intents of the DSP, this study focused on highlighting the benefits the SOC reaped from the program due to the connections that tie their academic success into greater investment by giving back to their communities. If the DSP cultivates those kinds of investments and ties to their communities, then this study, along with my questions, are worthwhile as they speak back to the current literature reviewed above. This study provides a different orientation about why Students of Color succeed rather than asking why they fail. This study does this by highlighting the navigational and resistance strategies they use to challenge deficit notions of college attainment.

CHAPTER 4

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: FINDINGS ON THE IMPACT OF THE DIVERSITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Introduction

In this chapter, I address the findings for my three research questions: 1) How do Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in the Diversity Scholars Program (DSP) describe their experiences and involvement in the program, 5 to 7 years after enrolling in the course?; 2) how do students who participated in the DSP describe its influence on their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and critical consciousness?; and lastly 3) in what ways did the DSP nurture or empower Chicanx/Latinx students' academic success and achievement?

The first question is answered in Part I where I address the ways that Chicanx/Latinx students who participated in DSP between the 2007-2011 cohort years describe the impact the DSP had on them in reinterpreting their precollege, K-12 experiences, knowledge from home, and community involvement prior to their 1st year in college. These sets of experiences are captured by the *Inputs* as described in the I-E-O model. The second research question is answered in Part II, where the Chicanx/Latinx student participants describe how the DSP impacted the development of their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and/or self-esteem 5 to 7 years after they took

the course and graduated from IMU. The *Environment* in the I-E-O model captures these sets of experiences. Lastly, Part III answers the last research question concerning how the DSP nurtured and/or empowered the development of students' *critical consciousness* and academic success and achievement as captured by the *Output* discussion in the I-E-O model.

Based on the individual interviews with the 10 Chicanx/Latinx student participants, a focus group with 5 out of the 10, and other demographics (see Appendix F for more information), my findings suggest that the exposure they received during their 1st year in the DSP did influence several dimensions of students' identity, educational achievement, and aspirations. The DSP not only introduced Chicanx/Latinx students to culturally deficient (Blanton, 2003; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001b) theories and epistemologies (see Scheurich & Young, 1997) that frame their everyday lives and education, but the program also helped them identify and develop specific perspectives and tools to eradicate these deficit views about themselves and others. The DSP also catalyzed their ability to see themselves as empowered agents of change.

The Chicanx/Latinx students described themselves as holding ingrained beliefs before participating in the DSP about pursuing a strong work ethic based on the expectation that, "if you work hard, you will get far" (Luis, 2015). They initially believed that the main reason they had made it to college was because of the quality and quantity (Astin, 1982) of their hard work and effort. Moreover, through the open ended questions, it also became clear that there was a critical distinction between the cultural knowledge they entered with and how, through their involvement in the DSP during their 1st year, their critical worldview and understanding about their identities and social inequality

improved radically.

The I-E-O Model

Astin's (1993) Input-Environment-Output (I-E-O) conceptual framework is utilized as a way to organize and assess the impact of the DSP on the Chicanx/Latinx student participants before (Input), during (Environment) and after college (Output). The I-E-O model provided the framework through which I analyzed the individual responses to the open-ended questions posed in this study (see Figure 1).

The main objective of the open-ended questions was to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives about their experiences in the DSP as well its overall impact after their 1st year of college. Shortly after completing each of the individual interviews with all 10 DSP alumni, I recorded my own self-reflection after each individual interview. A professional transcriber, my sister Cindy, or my cousin Cynthia transcribed each interview and I also reviewed all transcriptions.

The Hyper RESEARCH 3.7.3 software program enabled me to upload all 10 interview transcriptions to better organize the qualitative data collected for this study. This software program, while complicated at first, helped me organize the transcriptions by the name of the participants and in the order each interview was completed. The setup was fast and easy to do and what I appreciated the most is that I could open the file using any computer as long as it had the software so I took my data everywhere.

I could work with my data and developed codes that were well organized within the transcription document. The codes were also saved in another folder for immediate access. In terms of the interview protocol, I divided the questions (see Appendix E) into

five sections:

1) *Educational Aspirations and Educational Experiences;*

2) *Educational Benefits;*

3) *Development Benefits;*

4) *Attitudinal Benefits; and*

5) *Postcollege Benefits.*

I then reorganized the interview data to fit within the I-E-O framework to follow a temporal sequence of the participants' experience prior to college (Input), their experience in the Diversity Scholars Program (Environment), and their postcollege experiences (Output).

Based on the answers to the questions, I then constructed a table that comprised the set of categories and codes that were identified based on common frequencies. The categories and codes were then analyzed based on the data-dumps and cases were created under each category and code. This allowed me to distinguish when the student participants were referring to their K-12 education, community involvement, and the knowledge from the home students entered with prior to the 1st year of college.

I believe that the I-E-O model is a helpful organizational, theoretical, and practical tool when analyzing the discourse of Chicanx/Latinx students and other Students of Color, as it helps confirm the fact that they enter college with a bank of knowledge and it is just a matter of illuminating that knowledge (good and bad) to (re)conceptualize the way higher education or educational policies can better support their academic success.

Moreover, what made the analysis of this particular qualitative data set rich in

information was its complexity in contrast and contradiction between what they were taught within the K-12 educational system and during their participation in the DSP. For example, when asked about his thoughts about the course assignments Luis states:

> Oh my God, I found them really challenging, very difficult…not only because of its content, personally difficult. Academically, I think it was challenging because I wasn't used to reading. I thought I knew how to read until I got to college (laughs) I wasn't used to reading at that level or thinking critically and deeply about certain issues, but it was most challenging because it was so personal, it really like hit me hard, umm I mean I remember the first time we watched a movie about Prop 187 (the first modern anti-immigration legislation enacted in California). Oh my God. That had me crying. I was just like, oh, it was just a very emotional experience for me. Umm you know when I learned about meritocracy, I remember I was like, oh my God! I fell into the trap! Because that's literally everything that I truly, genuinely believed. I thought that I was at the [university] because I worked hard and I deserved this. And so I was like, oh wow, this is actually a system set out for us to believe that and it's not an equal playing field. And yeah, so it was very challenging on an emotional and personal level, for me to really be able to identify things from my academic and educational journey in the past. You know- I was like, oh wow, now I'm able to name things and understand them in a way that I had never been pushed in that way.

Feelings of shame became evident in Luis's eyes as he shared how all his life he sincerely believed he deserved to be at a university until he watched the documentary where he learned he was one of the few "lucky" ones to make it in an unjust and uneven playing field. All throughout his K-12 experience, Luis shares how he was taught to believe in the myth of meritocracy, which *promotes the false belief that anybody who works hard will get far.*

While no doubt Luis, like many other Chicanx/Latinx university students, did indeed work hard to get admitted to a Research I university like IMU there was still a general sense among them that they "didn't deserve it." They believed they were among the few fortunate ones to make it after taking the course. This was a common theme expressed by other Chicanx/Latinx students. For example, Ana reflects back to her

transition from middle school to high school stating:

> …umm, middle school… I had a lot of friends and it was great. What was sad was, you know I went to middle school and a lot, most students there went to [the same] high school after that. So I had a lot of friends in 9th grade and I remember we would have lunch and it was like 15 of us in the cafeteria. And then by the end of freshman year there was like 5 of us. You know so it was like the group getting smaller and smaller, so many people dropping out…it got my attention. I felt lonely; I had to make new friends.

Clearly, Ana expressed feeling lonely as all her middle school friends were slowly dropping out. She felt fortunate to have continued, but did not fully understand why. She simply assumed the students had to pursue other considerations and she was now left alone to make new friends without comprehending why all her friends were disappearing. Again, most students in this study explained how, prior to DSP, they had assumed that the responsibility for succeeding or failing lay solely on them, without analyzing the process of schooling and realizing the structural and systemic problems created by educational systems.

Consistent with the literature on survivor's guilt (Covarrubias & Fryberg, 2014; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001a; Yosso, 2006), students went from feeling lucky that they made it to college to feeling bad for their peers who did not. Consuelo, like other participants, expressed painful feelings of guilt:

> …for the longest time before, before I came to college, before I took the ethnic studies class, I always thought … 'well some people are just lazy and… you know, if you work hard,' umm… 'you'll get what you, you know, you deserve and everything you want' and…I feel like it wasn't until like I got to take the ethnic studies class that I realized that like why am I, like, you know, blaming people for… a system that… you know… messed it up (for them)… our… umm, you know…it's the systems fault…

Consuelo did not stand alone as this was a common experience other Chicanx/Latinx student participants shared in this study. The DSP gave students the space to come to the

realization they were not alone, their feelings of racial inferiority, their belief in the myth of meritocracy, and their attempt to assimilate were all part of what is considered the American "norm" for Chicanx/Latinx students and other People of Color (Ramírez, 2014).

Consuelo also struggled with other challenges to get to college, and had assumed that motivation was central to her success:

> …if I hadn't been self-motivated, it's super easy to fall through like… the cracks, because umm, I mean, …I think it's different, and I'm not saying like… umm, some of the other students didn't do it because you know, I'm not saying they weren't motivated or that there is anything wrong with them,… but I think the reason why I was so motivated is because at the time I was in junior high and high school, my dad was in prison and I… (long silent pause, then she breaks down sobbing).

Consuelo, like other participants, explained how seemingly insurmountable challenges served to motivate them to continue. In Consuelo's case, her motivation was partially based on her commitment to helping her family during her father's absence. This was a common indicator of what motivated all the DSP. Yosso (2005) defines this as Aspirational Capital to explain how educational aspirations were the only "hope and dreams" the students had to solve the struggles and/or sacrifices of their families. Consuelo, like other students, interprets her high school classmates' departure from school not as an indication of their lack of motivation, but simply as a fact.

What became clear for me during this study is how the DSP participants did not assign a value judgment about the reasons why other Chicanxs/Latinxs did not continue on to college. They understood that their high school peers had different realities to consider that either delayed their entry to a 4-year college, entered the working world as teenagers, or were not fortunate enough to attend college. Yet, there is a significant

misconception in the College Choice literature on Latinxs that presumes they have the luxury of actually *choosing whether or not to go to college* (McDonough, 1997). Indeed, Zarate, Sáenz, and Oseguera (2011) observe that if higher education is to produce more Chicanx degree completers, then "it should begin with a thoughtful awareness of the unique college choice pathways and motivations that these students weigh at the point immediately before college entry" (p. 127). In addition to the failures of K-12 educational systems in preparing Chicanxs to attend and succeed in college, students' families have to also contend with the reality of increasing college tuition and costs, residency status, and the pervasive lack of information about preparing for and applying to college (Villalpando & Solórzano, 2005). The latter point is especially salient given the large numbers of Latinxs who are first-generation students. These are just among many of the complexities in terms of contradictions the Chicanx/Latinx students experienced in K-12.

Consuelo sums up these realities:

> …from K through 12, I was like, 'Oh I just gotta work hard, work hard and then I'll you know get what I want.' And now I look at it, and I'm like, 'yeah I could work hard but...I'm…for what?' I think that the reason that I changed too was because I looked at my past experiences, compared to like my classmates. So for example, I could work really hard and try to get good grades, but at the end of the day I still have to handle, like you know, I have younger sisters, and I have to work versus somebody else who works really hard and gets, you know, 4.0's but is an only child, and has divorced parents who are engineers, and blah, blah, blah. Like they, they can work hard and they'll like you know actually earn something that, well like not actually earn, but they'll get something faster. …and so, I was like I need to do something and like you know I'm gonna have to take care of my sisters and my mom…

Consuelo realizes that while she did work hard like her White classmates, she had additional responsibilities to attend to, like working or helping her family. In contrast, she wonders whether her classmates had similar responsibilities or whether their parents already had college degrees and could better support and guide them toward a college

education. So her mind was not merely focused on schoolwork, as there were other immediate realities she had to face. Once realizing this, Consuelo felt it was unjust because due to her additional responsibilities it would take her a longer to accomplish what others with fewer distractions would accomplish more quickly.

Major Findings

I found that the Chicanx/Latinx students' participation in the DSP did indeed influence the development of their racial/ethnic identity, cultural awareness, and self-esteem during and beyond college. My findings outline the major emergent themes that resulted from the individual interviews and focus group with the DSP alumni.

In the following sections, I illustrate the ways that Chicanx/Latinx DSP alumni spoke about the impact of the ethnic studies course within three major overarching narratives that evolved from the data: 1) K-12 Educational Experiences, 2) Knowledge from the Home, and 3) Community Involvement. Within each of these themes, I focus on the 10 students' narratives about their academic, relational, and shifting perceptions of Students of Color, and themselves. I share their experiences to illustrate their understanding about the systemic problem occurring within education and society. Within this analysis, I also draw on CRT/LatCrit's focus on centering experiential knowledge as a way to more fully draw a holistic understanding of the experiences of underserved communities.

Input (Precollege): The Diversity Scholars K-12 Educational Experiences

Chicanx/Latinx students often described a precollege educational experience that portrayed their racial/ethnic community histories and identities as deficient and as cultural and religious outsiders in Utah, especially if they did not adhere to a strong Latter Day Saint (LDS) religious faith. For the most part, all participants shared some sort of experience about how they were outcasts for being Mexican or Spanish speaking. "Internalized racism was kind of instilled in me," says Luis, in reference to his K-12 education in Utah. He explained that the impact of the negative assumptions and stereotypes held about him and Latinxs left many Latinx students no other choice but to attempt to assimilate and buy into a false idea of meritocracy. Ramírez (2014) questions the relationship between education and assimilation and between learning and unlearning as that of having to learn about the social and political inclusion, exclusion, marginalization, and subordination. For instance, Luis spoke about how throughout his K-12 education, he was identified as a "model minority":

> …I think aside from all the really fucked-up shit – you know- …it was actually kind of helpful in that it made me a real good school person [now]. Like I was- you know- that really annoying kid that like tried to know all the answers in school. I was always the teacher's pet. I wanted to get everything right. Cuz I didn't want to be seen like a dumb Mexican. Umm, and so it's interesting how that happened. I wanted to be the good person, uh, the good student, and that always kind of carried through from elementary, junior, high school.

This statement demonstrates how wanting to "do better in school" gains him a privileged class status as the "teacher's pet," which he willingly pursues as a way to avoid being stereotyped as a "dumb Mexican," a label that is presumably attributed to an academically disengaged or underperforming Latinx. He wanted to prove them wrong,

Yosso (2005) refers to this as familial capital which he gained from his father who constantly told him to break away from the stereotypes held about Mexicans not caring about education; he was often reminded to resist through education. Luis explains that he was not aware at the time that he was denying his Chicanx/Latinx identity to be viewed as an academic achiever, but now credits the DSP for helping him reexamine this dimension of his educational experience.

He now sees how academic achievement, even though a worthwhile pursuit, was also a pathway to disassociate himself from a devalued and maligned ethnic identity and culture. Of course, now he acknowledges that the racist educational process he experienced forced him into a zero sum game that teaches young people to believe that a Chicanx/Latinx identity is incompatible with superior academic achievement. Clearly, this binary forced him into an assimilationist framework that denied him of his own cultural resources, which might very well have enriched his education that much more. Unfortunately, in the case of most other Chicanx/Latinx students, the ability to draw on their critical ethnic, racial, and/or cultural consciousness while resisting an assimilationist educational framework often pushes them out of school (Valenzuela, 1999), and some become ensnared in a pipeline to prison rather than a pipeline to college (Valles, 2013).

Eva further supports this observation as she describes her *challenging* educational experiences, which included frequent trips to the guidance office after publicly disagreeing with stereotypical depictions of Latinx classmates like herself:

> I had a lot of challenges just because like… I don't know, I guess since I was really young, I kind of saw like teachers being [behaving] messed up or like… you know, just straight up racist, or straight up not treating… like me and my Latino [classmates] like … you know [like] fellow students or peers not treating us fairly and I would always, like, speak up and then they'd [teachers] be like "go to the office" and then I'd be like "okay" … but they [administrators] couldn't

> find anything kind of wrong there, right? Like I would explain to my mom like they were just being rude, straight up, you know, or just… things like that…

Eva at an early age, was well aware of the unjust treatment that she and her Latin@ classmates were facing as a result of their racial/ethnicity identity. She elaborates further,

> …for example, I took AP History my senior year, and that's when I was like 'Oh my God, I need to get out of here.' There was nine people in the class and I was the only Latina in there, and every time I was like (pause) we would talk about like you know current events in the newspaper, like at the beginning of class, and I remember every single time it was something about immigration! The teacher would be like, "what do you think," and I was like "Why? Why me?" Like, like, just really like, damn! Like, and I never had, like, the vocabulary to kind of explain what I was feeling or, like, I didn't know things had a name, right?

Having shared the various ways that she was constantly reminded that she was an outsider, she expresses her frustrations about always having to be the voice for the outsiders as she was the only student of color in an AP course.

The problem does not only lie in Eva being the only student of color in an AP course; she was also experiencing nonverbal microagressions immediately after noticing she was the only student of color out of nine students, where others made her feel as if she did not belong (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000) and that she had to be the voice for issues concerning immigration. The assumption that Eva can speak to this issue or on behalf of the immigrant community, whether she identified with that community or not, demonstrates the attacks that are often directed toward Chicanx/Latinx students. In essence, they sometimes express feeling exposed, attacked, or like they are expected to teach the class.

Clearly, Eva became upset about being placed in such a position, as this is often an immediate reaction that can often lead to disciplinary action if, for some reason, a Student of Color responds in a way that is interpreted as disrespectful due to feeling

personally attacked or humiliated. The demand for better treatment among Chicanx/Latinx students has often fallen into disciplinary action or consequences for speaking up about the way they were treated or questioned as a Person of Color, rather than understanding the disrespectful and naïve teaching pedagogy adopted by the teacher by singling out a Student of Color to make a point in class (Kohli & Solórzano, 2012).

Another common, and often detrimental, educational experience that emerged during student interviews was the practice of routinely being placed in ESL classes during their K-12 education, whether they spoke Spanish or not. The students described practices that circumvented established district and state educational policy that required preassessment to determine if they needed such a program.

English as a Second Language (ESL) (Mis)Placement

Zarate, Saenz, and Oseguera (2011) describe how Latinxs, in general, already face inferior learning conditions due to the lack of resources in the mostly racially segregated schools they attend, which are especially acute in comparison to their White counterparts. For Latinxs, these inferior educational conditions are often exacerbated when they are misplaced into *ESL* courses, where they are isolated and often neglected from the mainstream educational center of a school (Callahan, Wilkinson, Muller, & Frisco, 2009, as cited in Zarate et al., 2011).

Whether or not they were born in the U.S. or was already fluent in English, many students shared the experience of having been misplaced into ESL courses, even while concurrently being enrolled in honors classes. This form of misplacement frequently results in *racial displacement,* meaning Students of Color are displaced based on racial

stereotypes, regardless of whether or not they could speak English, given the interpretation offered by participants in this study. Some even referred to it as a form of racial profiling. Indeed, this practice is reminiscent of the previous widespread practice between the early 1900s through the 1970s of routine placing Latinx English Language Learners (ELL) into special education classes, as they were often assessed as "mentally deficient" (Sullivan, 2011).

According to most students participating in this study, this type of ELL racial displacement was widespread and frequently occurred during high school, making it difficult to enroll in college-prep courses. For example, Eduardo shared how when he came to the U.S. he was understandably placed in ESL classes in elementary school to improve his English language skills. However, in those same classes, Eduardo also witnessed many English-fluent and U.S.-born Latinos, mainly of Mexican origin, whom he describes as being unsure about why they were placed in the class. For Eduardo, it was clear why he was placed in an ESL class considering he had just arrived in the U.S, but at the time, he could not understand why there was such a large presence of U.S.-born and English-fluent Latinxs in the class with him.

Rafael is another DSP alumni who can describe the common experience of being placed in ESL courses as soon as he arrived in the U.S. However, he also describes how he found it puzzling that he continued being placed in ESL courses while simultaneously being placed in honors courses, such as math and science where teachers and students still needed to communicate in English. After all, students cannot perform experiments in a lab without understanding teachers' instructions. If he could communicate effectively in honors math and science courses, he wondered why he would be placed in ESL social

studies, history, or other related courses?

Jose was another DSP alumni who remembers how most of the Students of Color were in ESL classes or basic introductory classes. He describes his high school as *diverse,* but only in two principal ways, both of which were related to socio-economic class: Students of Color came from low income, working class communities, while the White students seemed to live in the more affluent communities.

> So you have your really rich kids, and you have your, you know, blue-collar, working [class] students. They're basically in the same school, but like you know, the IB [International Baccalaureate] and AP classes and honors courses are all [taken] by the White students. But, so if there's Students of Color in those classes— like I had a friend who was in AP English—umm but he was in ESL as well. So I was like, what the heck is going on here? (Laughs). Yeah, so, I feel like, even like my senior high school year I still had to take the ESL exam. And I mean, it's very basic, it was like there's a drawing of a person opening a door, "write down what the image is saying" – "opening the door" it's not like [that difficult], yeah. (Laughs)

Unfortunately, this was also often the case for many other Chicanx/Latinx students who shared how they were unjustly placed in ESL courses simply based on their parent(s) speaking Spanish or other stereotypical assumptions (Sullivan, 2011). Yet, whether or not they knew they could have insisted on being placed in more advanced courses, they seldom challenged their schools. In exploring the special education misplacement, Sullivan (2011) states there does exist a scarcity of large-scale data to explain how students get identified and enrolled in a special needs course, and further states several reasons why the need was not based on assessment but rather the lack of emergent English proficiency programs to further support students.

Eva Del Carmen is another student who felt she was unjustly placed in an ESL course as she had learned to speak and write in English early during elementary school. She immigrated to the U.S. at the age of 2 and participated in Head Start and other early

education programs that helped prepare her for school. The fact that she participated in these types of early education programs and was continuously enrolled from kindergarten through high school leads her to believe that she did not belong in ESL classes:

> …so there was… an ESL teacher … in my elementary school and they tried putting me in ESL but… I was like honestly?… I'm going to say more intelligent [answers]; like my… tests were more, were better than some of the White kids. So it was like… clearly I do not belong in ESL (chuckles)… well I just like kind of heard my mom saying that right? And so like she was like 'she's (Eva) smarter,' and it was like clearly, like, to me, it was like I'm reading better than these—than some White kids and I'm like native Mexican born…like do you know what I mean?

It was clear in Eva and her mother's eyes that she did not belong in an ESL class, as she was more advanced in her reading than the "White kids." She comprehended that even though she was a native Spanish speaker—or perhaps because she was bilingual—she was able to communicate in English more effectively than native-born U.S. students.

Of course, one has to wonder why these students' parents did not challenge their kids' placement in classes that may not have benefitted them or worse, kept them away from enrolling in college-bound courses. This example can be further complicated as a form of "within school segregation" (Valencia, 2011) which adds to a historical component when Students of Color were segregated from the White students and placed into separate classrooms on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Such comparison can be demonstrated today as contemporary segregation of Chicanx/Latinx students through the descriptions of the student population in their ESL classrooms. The students in this study believed that their parents did not challenge theses placements out of the deep respect Latinx parents hold for teachers and the educational system. Some have written about the deep respect that Latinx parents have for teachers, which is similar to the respect they hold for the clergy. Valencia and Pearl (2011) describe Latinx parents'

attitude toward teachers and clergy as if they were "unelected authority figures" (p. 282) that would be immune to having their teachings challenged. It is not due to the culture of the parents but rather the fear of retaliation, lack of knowledge about parents' rights, among other concerns, that limit students' parents from further challenging school officials (Valencia & Black, 2002).

As for Consuelo, her experience speaks more to the consequences of taking on the dominant language as a form of assimilation, especially if it results in forgetting her own native language:

> Umm in school I only spoke English. Umm, but…and that's one thing that I like really regret is the fact that the older I got the less Spanish I spoke and so now my Spanish is like really bad and it's like super embarrassing and it sucks cuz you know it just makes you feel like…what the heck happened to my… this is like my roots…this is what…this is what I first… this is the first language that I spoke and now I can't even really (gets emotional and teary)…(gasp)…but yeah…umm… I remember I hated it because I didn't understand anybody and I just felt lost umm but I learned English cuz one of my cousins you know little kids pick it up really fast and so I learned it really fast and then… all I remember was 2nd grade when I was taking ESL classes and just like having to read books like over and over again like saying it this way …say it that way umm and… And so…so yeah… elementary school was…just it kinda uh mmm….you know as soon as I started…as soon as I learned English it got easier…umm… by the time I had gotten to junior high, I no longer had to take them. I don't, I don't even know how that happen. I don't even know the process all I remember is them taking me to those classes and then somehow they just stopped, I don't know (laugh) and so, so no, I had already gone passed it but… but yeah, I did, I've always done really good in school…

Jeanne Oakes (1990) describes the process of tracking students into different academic levels based on identity markers and the stereotypes attributed to these markers. Girls have historically been tracked into less-challenging classes focusing on nonscience or math disciplines, while working class boys would be tracked into manual arts tracks (Oakes, 1985). This practice persists today in more covert ways, but is also exacerbated by pernicious racial profiling for Latinx students, regardless of their gender.

Chicanx/Latinx students in this study shared how they believed they were unjustifiably placed in ESL courses because they spoke English with an accent, were immigrants, or simply because they were Latinx.

The other factor that surfaced in my conversations with these students was their clear understanding of class-based tracking, which is rooted in the fact that more affluent White students almost always attended the better-resourced schools in the wealthier communities. This class-based observation, in their minds, intersected with race and ethnicity in ways that privileged the educational opportunities and outcomes of White students over Latinxs.

What was almost unanimous was the fact that participants in this study identified the DSP as the principal reason for their development of this analysis of their educational experiences. DSP introduced the participants in this study to sociological studies and race theories that helped them develop this level of insight into their schooling experiences before college. Indeed, the DSP also enhanced their understanding of how race/ethnicity intersects with class, which they seemed to feel more keenly when they were enrolled in AP or Honors courses.

Advanced Placement and Honors Courses

Zarate et al. (2011) note that while the number of Chicanx/Latinx students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses is increasing, there is still a large percentage of Chicanx/Latinx students not completing or passing the AP test, especially in contrast to their White counterparts. Many participants in this study stated that there were usually "maybe like two or three of [them]" in AP classes. But they also quickly clarified that

there were many more AP classes where they were "the only one" (Eva, 2015).

Interestingly, for Eduardo, he seemed excited about the fact that he was often the only Latino in the AP or Honors courses he took in high school because he saw that as a more challenging environment than the ESL classes that were predominantly Latinx.

In contrast, Rafael's experiences in his AP chemistry class was more consistent with the experiences of other Students of Color:

> My first class in high school was AP chemistry. And [when] I walked in I [noticed I] was the only Latino in AP Chemistry (laughs). And all the White folks just looked at me like, "you're in the wrong class," right? And I knew I wasn't, I was like "No, I'm pretty sure I'm in the right class!" (Laughs)

Without even knowing Rafael's "academic" standing, he is immediately stereotyped and categorized as incapable of being in an AP course; just like Consuelo, his presence is questioned visually through his classmates stares of doubt, further experiencing racial microagressions.

Regrettably, being the only Latinxs in AP Chemistry also brought other challenges for Rafael, but this time with other Latinxs. He was teased about wanting "to be White" for being placed in AP courses. He states:

> …in their eyes, I was trying to be White, so I was also like, you know, always with that in the back of my head, right? Like, "am I trying to be White?" What the fuck? Like you know, what am I doing? Quien soy (who am I)? So I kept that throughout my middle school years and high school years, right?

To have the ability to read the body language and stares of White students while also having other Students of Color question his placement in advanced courses as "wanting to be White" can become a heavy load as such experiences can expose one to feelings of inferiority and ethnic fraud that can be further silencing.

Whether being accused of "acting White" or simply being the only

Chicanx/Latinx in an AP or Honors course, the effect appears to be the same. For example, Ana speaks about her experience being in AP classes with almost all White and more affluent students:

> …I started taking honors classes and AP classes and there were very few Students of Color. Like, sometimes it was just me and another student [of color]. Or sometimes I was the only one in class, I mean the only student [of color] in the honors or AP class. And that was rough, because I no longer had classes with my friends [of color] that had been my friends since middle school and you know the beginning of high school. So we kind of grew apart and I felt like they felt like I was abandoning them, turning my back on them, for moving into these Honors and AP classes. And then with my [new] classmates in Honors and AP, I just couldn't fit in because we were involved in like a lot of [different] things. Like, they were the students in like the sports teams, all that doing athletics, and I just couldn't stay after school to do that because I didn't have a ride to go home. My mom had to work, so I couldn't participate it in those activities, so that was rough. Like I didn't fit in…

Ana provides a great example of her experiences in attempting to transition into an unfamiliar place such as an AP class, leaving her friends behind. Such experience placed her in an in-between space where she was living between the margins, *ni de aqui, ni de aya* (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1989). Ana was no longer considered part of the same middle school group she grew up with and she could not make new friends in the AP class as they had different opportunities that did not permit her to integrate into their culture.

For Jamie, being placed in honors courses, as she understood, meant you were more advanced than other students in your school. However, upon entering college, Jamie realized she was not as prepared as she thought she would be and states:

> It was hard. I'm not going to lie it was really hard. Honors classes did not prepare you for that (laughs) when I was in High School I took honors classes and so I felt like our reading level was advanced compared to everybody else who took regular English. Nope, I was wrong.

Regrettably, this seemed to be the case for many of the participants in this study who

came from low resourced schools and were not well prepared to excel in AP or Honors courses. As more participants described their experiences in trying to excel academically, it became clear that another important theme was the influence exerted on their aspirations by school staff.

High School Counselors and Latinx College Recruiters

Most of the Chicanx/Latinx participants described the negative encounters they faced in high school by school personnel, specifically high school counselors, who held deficit notions about their potential to further their education at four year institutions.

Eva describes the frustrating experience of a counselor challenging her interest in enrolling in AP and Honors courses:

> …it was just kind of like, ok, here are the classes you're going to take, and he was like, "are you sure you want to do A.P.? Are you sure you want to do Honors? Are you sure you want to do concurrent enrollment?" And I'd be like, "Yes, I can do it!" Like, I'm not… Like in my head I was like, "I'm not dumb, you jerk!" You know when you're like sixteen or seventeen and so (pause), I was just like, "Oh my God!"

Such harmful perceptions of how Chicanx/Latinx students might perform in 4-year universities only diminish students' beliefs about their potential. Similarly, almost all participants described counselors wanting to track them into a community college because they may not "make it" at a 4-year campus, especially not one like IMU.

Participants described having to find other means of help to prepare applications to 4-year colleges and IMU. For example, when asked about her high school's counselors, Eva states:

> …in [my high school] you didn't really have counselors telling you, "you can go to a university," you know, they're just kind of like, I don't know- they don't really tell you to do that…

Eva went on to describe how counselors may not have told Chicanx/Latinx students about 4-year universities, especially IMU, but for majority White students, she said it was an unstated assumption. “I was never told like you’re going to go to college by educators” insisted Eva, but she was encouraged to apply to community colleges:

> …he’s like “another option for you would be,” and he pulls up the [community college website] which is like a 2-year technical or whatever the hell it is and I was just like, “Oh my God! I’m going to a 4-year University! Why are you even telling me this? I’ve already told you I’m accepted right?” And he’s like, “it's open enrollment,” and I was like “I don’t think you heard me.” I’m like, “I got accepted to [IMU].” …If a White student would have told him that, he would’ve been like “Congratulations, here are all the scholarships,” or whatever right? And so since then, I was like, I will never again step foot in this damn office…

Moreover, Eva explains how she witnessed counselors mostly working with the White LDS students, and provides an example:

> …We had to have senior interviews … so like a semester before you graduate, you know, you go and meet with a counselor that you’re assigned to. So, like, A to Z with this one. I was assigned to this White male and he was like, I had the same exact one as my friend Sarah, right? She’s White and LDS, so I talked to her after and I was like, “what did he ask you,” and she’s like “where I’m going to go to college,” and I was like “oh!,” you know. And then, to me, the first thing he said was “what are your plans after high school?” Even just the phrase that you start with, it's like you’re already telling me I’m not going to go to college right? And I told him, “I’m going to [IMU],” because by this time, I mean, it was like two weeks before I found out I was on full ride, right, and he was like “have you even applied?” He’s like, “do you really think you’re going to get in with your grades?” and I was like, “I’ve already, actually, already been accepted, because I think I applied in November, got accepted like January,” whatever. And he was like, “oh, well how are you going to pay for it?”. Just straight up, like I was just like, “oh hell no,” like, oh my God, I was so…

This particular experience provides so many examples to demonstrate the hostile environment students such as Eva enter into when attempting to get support and guidance from their high school counselors. Not only are their goals and aspirations challenged, but they also hear a clear message of doubt in their ability to excel.

Aware of his undocumented status, Jose remembers walking into the counselor’s

office the end of his junior year stating, “I knew my time was running out. It was, umm like my free ride was over!” For Jose, he understood that, as an undocumented student, he was entitled to a free K-12 education, but not to a college education. He explained that this realization left him jarred, “it was like a feeling of hunger - I knew I'm meant to do more, but I didn't know how to do it.” Jose did not want his education to end so he sought out to see if there was any hope left for him to continue with his education. Even though he was well aware that his GPA was “not that great,” he also knew that he could not give up on his dream. He sought his counselor’s advice, but to his dismay, his counselor said:

> … “well, maybe you should do more like mechanic work.” And he was trying to push me to those kinds of programs, and I was like, “well you know, I was thinking [IMU], or like [The State University],”… He’s like, “well, Jose, like umm, sometimes school is not meant for everybody, and sometimes you know you kind of have to realize it.” And I was so mad, I just walked out of his office. And I was like, “I'm never coming back to you, never again.”

Many of the participants reflected on how they got to college as a result of college preparation programs or recruitment programs for Latinx students. It was by attending presentations at lunch on these programs that Latinx students began to understand that they might have an opportunity to go to college:

> …I was very fortunate to meet [IMU Latina recruiter] – she kinda was the person who pushed me into that…like I said, I didn't have a good GPA, so I was sponsored through the CESA program…[and into] the DSP…

Regardless of how students entered the course, whether it was through sponsorship, regular admissions, or scholarships, one thing they all had in common was the negative or lack of support they received from their high school counselors. For the most part, students shared how Latinxs who worked under the Student Recruitment Center at IMU recruited them and would constantly reach out to them during lunchtime to talk about college.

For example, when I asked Rafael who had helped him apply to college, he immediately referred a recruiter of color by her name and states how he related to her due to their Peruvian ethnic identity.

> …Pero [But] like la persona que me ayudó fue [the person that helped me was] Denise Castañeda who, you know, she's half Peruvian, half Mexican, so it was kind of cool. She was like a big sister to me. I met her as a sophomore, I want to say, at Granite High School before it closed, and I didn't get in touch with her until a MEChA conference when I was in high school. When we had two schools. And then I reconnected and then after that I was referred to Brizia Ceja who worked at UNP, and also a fellow undocumented Latina, who helped me thru the process of applying for the U as an undocumented student, which was huge because I didn't know what to do, I didn't know who to ask for help, because I knew I couldn't do it at school. My counselors all were White, like you know, didn't feel comfortable revealing my status, because on one hand I was a model minority I had the status thing, because I remember clearly that people would compare other students to me. And then - but I had that status thing, right? And it kept coming back, and I was like, oh shit, I can't do this and I can't do that …

For Rafael, he found a connection with this particular recruiter based on her ethnicity but in general as another student of color who understood his experience in high school as an undocumented student and was then a reference to another student of color creating a sense of safe networking and support among his peers. However, Rafael expresses a critical concern in relation to his counselor. While other DS participants expressed how their academic capabilities were questioned, for Rafael, it was his status that prevented him from asking for help, for he was often referred to what he identified as a "Model Minority" meaning the ideal Student of Color who is academically succeeding did not leave room for disappointment.

For Liliana, her lower than expected grades and her undocumented status were not the determining factors that prevented or made her doubt the possibilities of getting into the institution of her choice but rather her high school counselor, as she states when I asked her to tell me about her relationship with her counselor:

> My high school counselor? Well, that was interesting too, because a lot of my experiences in high school made me more aware of- yes, I am a minority. I know, no one had to tell me, because the experiences told me themselves. My high school counselor, he was very nice. I met with him several times. But when I was getting ready to apply for college, I specifically wanted to apply to the [Intermountain University], and I remember clearly that he told me that I should apply to [Local Community College] instead, that I should go that route and then go to the [IMU] and I asked him why, why can't I just go straight to the [IMU]? And he just old me it was easier to go the other route. And you know, I have no doubt that the [local] community college is a good school, but the fact that he told me that, basically told me that I couldn't, that I couldn't go this route, and I couldn't apply to the [IMU] and make it in- umm, I don't know… And yeah, my grades were not the greatest, but umm, you know I, there's the classes where I really did well in and the classes where I just honestly didn't care too much about. But when I have a goal – and, I just think any student, when they have a goal - I just think it was so wrong of him to just kind of shut it down. And not give me all the options and say "oh hey, there's you know, there's [IMU], there's also the [local] community college, there's also these things" he just simply told me that it's easier to go the other route.

Liliana was well aware that she was a minority based on her early experiences, and partly it was her parents who made her aware that as an undocumented student, she had limited access to an education, but that did not stop her. She was clear about what she wanted to do with her life and was very outspoken about it. Liliana recognized she did not have the best grades but through her interview she had expressed how she became disinterested in some of the courses, as they did not engage her so there was a clear understanding of what she was looking to get out of her education.

Ana is another DS participant who shared how her negative experience with her high school counselor, or school officials in general, only made it clear that she would have to, in a sense, wear a shielded guard to make it through the educational system, as she states her K-12 experience:

> They were terrible. Yeah. I have a lot. I remember, you know, after I was in Honors classes my sophomore year, I learned about concurrent enrollment - classes you can take in high school and get college credit. Or you can do a technical career, like pharmacists' technician or something like that. I didn't think

> I could afford college. My family, mom was a single mother, like going to college wasn't a given for me. So I wanted to do a technical career if I could while I was still in high school and I went and asked a high counselor. And she said, "oh honey, why are you even bothering with that? Let's just get you to graduate cuz you may just get pregnant and drop out. So our priorities is to help you graduate - forget about college now" and so it's like…as a first generation college student as you say, my mother... I knew she was completely wrong. Like, in my mind there was no doubt of what I was capable of, and it just - it was just, it was offensive, because it was like, "You don't know me!" Before that, I had met with her for like 5 minutes, just to choose my classes for the next year and it was like, "ok, fill out this form, sign here, take to your parents, get it signed, drop it off", that's all it was. So I wasn't going to let this person, who didn't know me, tell me what I could do or not.

For Ana, she had no expectations to go to college as she stated, she just wanted to get general information to begin technical courses during high school and to work right after she graduated to help her single mother. The low expectations high school counselors have placed on Students of Color based on stereotypes such as "you'll just end up pregnant" is one many Latina students commonly express while Latino students are assumed to have gang affiliations placed on them due to their ethnicity. However, it was her second negative interaction with the high school counselor that made her realize she could do it and no one was going to tell her otherwise. The intentions to prove schools officials wrong about their intentions of earning a college degree was felt through many of their interviews. For Eva, once she arrived home she was so determined to prove them wrong as she remembers telling her mom, "And… and I told my Mom-I'm like the day I get my diploma, I'm going to go into his office and be like look, Bachelor's, what up! like (laughs) you know." It is that drive that pushes Students of Color to not fall through the cracks that were intentionally placed there for them to fall. All the DSP alumni demonstrated how they would continue to have high educational aspirations despite persistent educational inequalities often placed on them.

However, the DSP alumni often recognized a particular Latinx college recruiter or personnel that not only demonstrated their belief in them but further found resourceful ways to best help support them to get accepted to college. As such, most DSP expressed how it was through social capital (Yosso, 2005) that they were able to apply to college, get financial support, but most importantly, get referenced to the DSP through various forms discussed later in this chapter.

Ana's experience leads to the next section in which all students expressed additional responsibilities they took on while being a K-12 student, in various forms but how those layers of responsibilities drove their motivation to pursue higher education.

Home-Based Cultural Knowledge

Delgado Bernal (2001) speaks on how Chicana students reference their home knowledge as a way to navigate their way around educational injustices. The DS alumni also draw on knowledge from the home to explain how it was possible for students to survive and academically succeed within an educational system that is not intended to serve them. A common home responsibility all the DS alumni shared was the expectation that as bilingual speakers, they would have to help with translating whether it was in person or by mail. It was a huge role for many of the students at such an early age as Eva explains:

> ...yes so, we were always required like, as soon as since I was eleven it was like "Vas a ir a traducir" (You're going to translate) "Noooooooo!" and like you know when you're at that age you're like- "I'm shy. I just don't want to talk to people. Like hell no. Like I was like ahhhh and like that's how it started and…when it's like... something in my family, it's like… that was one of my main responsibilities... was kind of like, having to be here for my Mom and for my brother and like, you know just kind of trying to keep eh… keep everyone all together and stuff.

For many of the DS alumni, translating was not an option and as Eva shares, it was uncomfortable to be the spokesperson for her parents at such an early age considering she was so shy. But it was this among many other responsibilities that taught the students leadership skills that would later come in handy and much of it had to do with witnessing how their parents with limited English still held leadership roles to support their communities. When asked if they believe it is important to give back to your community, Eva referenced her parents' involvement in their community through their local church:

> ...well my parents worked at holy cross ministries in Salt Lake City, but they had branched out. They were like the two main outreach workers for like Heber city and Park City so Summit and Wasatch counties. And they were pretty much social workers, but without- they never got a degree in social work or anything. It was just, you know- outgoing and charismatic in the community so they were given kind of this position out of…when I was about eleven "tambien" [also] my Dad kind of started they call it "reportes de verano" [Summer Reporters] at first and it was just like we were kind of the guinea pig group and it was like a group of twelve of us from Church. And my Dad started it cuz he was seeing like so many kids are going into crime and stuff right. And so he was like "there has to be something to keep them busy" so he would just take us for six hours a day in the summer. It started just summers in the park and stuff um to play, go swimming, whatever. And then by the next year it had become like Parks City School District got involved and I was like twelve at the time so my Dad was like I think you and you know the rest of the guinea pig group you're ready to be like group leaders or whatever. So we would help like the older, like [chuckle] the staff you know…

Eva mentioned how her parents were among the first Latin@ families to arrive to the Heber community. They became involved at their local church as a way to survive the hostile community they lived in. It was then when Eva's father realized the need to implement summer programs to keep kids entertained, as they were not heading in the right direction. It was through her parents' involvement with the community that Eva was able to see the importance of serving one's community. She also saw the importance through her father's own initiative in taking the lead toward developing a summer youth

program that shortly became recognized by the school district. Both Eva's father and mother taught her the importance of altruism and passed on the knowledge and leadership demonstrated from the home, as she explains her mother's involvement in spaces traditionally not intended for her:

> ...So it's like, I don't really know how to explain… you might need to like Google exactly what it is but the truth is, it's mostly White males like involved in the Rotary Club. And my Mom got involved in the Park City Rotary club. So you know Latina woman over here… I think I was like in the eleventh grade. So like since then I was like I want to be just like my parents you know… And my Dad passed away when I was thirteen… and I think they kind of saw the need you know what I mean and so I'm kind of like if it weren't for my parents giving back to their community who had you know never really given anything to them yet like Heber and Park City would not kind of be uh in the… as progressive as they are now I think, like if they didn't, [her parents] were kind of that bridge in between the Anglo community and the Latino community kind of like it's okay to like integrate, I don't know if that's the right word…

Both Eva's mother and father played a major role in motivating her to challenge spaces that were not intended for her. For many of the DS alumni, it was their parents' active or silent resistance that allowed them to become politically involved and act as social agents early on in their education.

As Jose shares, it was not only his high school involvement in Mestizo Arts & Activism, but also his parents helped him gain an interest in helping others, as he shares:

> ...Yeah, my family, my mom and dad I think kind of really started that. They've always really helped like uh new immigrants coming to the US, they, you know, we didn't live alone in the house probably until like probably until high school, cuz we'd always had people living in our homes. And my parents wouldn't charge them anything - like just getting them on their feet. And the importance of that. My parents really taught me a lot. Not until getting into Mestizo Arts & Activism that I really, really seemed like we're all interconnected, we all receive and give back. You know it's all a full circle. Umm, so it was through those experiences that I found the passion of like, working with community and giving back, what I got through the opportunities.

Jose's experience did not make sense until after he was able to make the connections. He

shared how fortunate his parents were in owning their home through the help of others and how they wanted to do the same for other families. Jose's parents' home became the home to many incoming immigrants to help them get on their feet at no charge. While this might not have been a pleasant experience at first for Jose, as he never really got to enjoy the privacy of his home, once in high school he was able to make sense of the "open house policy" his parents had created as a way to give back to others. Jose's parents used their home as an act of resistance and a form of leadership and it was then passed on to their children.

For Lili, on the other hand, her parents' approach to addressing their children's status was more through silent resilience. However, the 2006 United States immigration reform protest would be the beginning of Lili's political activism. Feeling unsettled for the negative experiences she would encounter on a daily basis, Lili describes her K-12 experience:

> ...Yeah, because - I don't know, a lot of my friends, we all got along and it was great until – umm so it was interesting, I went to school with one of my - who's my best friend now- and 9th & 10th grade were fine, we didn't notice a lot of things, but during our 11th and 12th grade, that's when we started to experience a lot more, where we felt alienated, and that was because a lot of the immigration protests were starting to happen, and bills were starting to pass, and we didn't know much about that at that point, all we knew was what we saw on the news. Something was going to affect us and our families, and that made us a little bit aware and actually, me and her planned a walk-out during high school. I think it was our junior year. And that's when everything turned around for us, because not only did we become - I don't know, we put kind of our education on the line - the Principal said, I will suspend you and whoever walks out with you. And we just decided to do it anyway. And he ended up not suspending us. He ended up opening his mind to the issues that our population was facing and there were teachers who were supporting us, and there were teachers who didn't, and it was very apparent. And when we went back to school that day, that we walked out, there was a whole discussion about it in English class, and we just felt so alienated, like the students were making cruel jokes and like that's when everything turned around for us. And some people ended up going to the side where they supported us, and some just didn't talk to us anymore…Um-hmm. It

> was very few, but we realized it was - they were our friends but we realized they were just ignorant and they just didn't understand what our families and what we were facing, you know, the fear that we had. So at that point, me and my best friend, we just didn't care. We just said, we have to do something and join the others…

This leadership role helped Lili, along with her friend, make the risky decision to actively start a walk out at her high school, even after her principal had warned her she would be suspended. This only goes to demonstrate the resistance capital Yosso (2005) speaks about. While growing up, Lili's parents made her aware she was undocumented, and consciously or unconsciously raised their children to demonstrate resistance to secure equity, and that meant taking a risk of the unknown. Additionally, Lili knew she deserved more and her "hopes and dreams" for better opportunities for her family allowed her aspirational capital to withstand the fear that was facing them at that time.

As such, Eva also spoke about how her parents were her motivation to continue in higher education as a result of her parents' sacrifices, as she states:

> ...yeah, umm I always knew like we were brought to the U.S. for a reason. And I was always trying to kind of figure out why? I was never told like you're going to go to college by educators until High school I had one Latina and that was my first Latina teacher ever and I took A.P. Spanish because I was planning on maybe doing like a Spanish teaching degree but, I ended up...I was like no, but you know I saw her with like a degree and everything she kind of you know was like think about college you know and then I met [Latino College Recruiter] and she was like what are your plans after High School? Where are you going to go to school? And I was like I might do hair school. I might you know my counselor told me college of Eastern Utah and she was like you should try to get into the "[IMU]" and I was like I'm not smart enough for that and she's like what! and that's when she was like you are! You're like perfect. Watch this! Yeah like they were really well known and still people are like "eres hija de [her father's name]" and I'm like yes! Like I'm like Oh God and they're like "you're so old" and I'm like leave me alone (laughs) I'm like Okay. Yeah but it was like um he was like… his death was kind of my motivation... I was like "you know you have to make an impact on somebody's life, kind of thing. I was like, that's what I want to do you, know? So I started just a bunch of service like I was in student government and we were like required to do service so we would like, I don't know go help clean stuff…

The above examples demonstrate the initiative the DSP alumni took on during their K-12 educational experiences regardless of the barriers that were consistently placed upon them. While Lili's parents advised her not to attend the walkouts, they passed on the aspirational capital and resistance in knowing that while her sacrifices would put her family at risk, it would also open the doors to opportunities, which was the same risk her parents took when bring their children to the U.S. for better opportunities. As for Eva, she took on the leadership roles both her father and mother taught her through their involvement in the community which prompted her to continue following their lead in wanting to do more for her community.

Rafael could not have said it better when I asked what, besides the Latina college recruiter, drove his motivation to attend college; he answers:

> ...To go, it was again, my mom, right. It was knowing that I HAD to [go to college]. It was my responsibility. Like, the least I could do. Like you know, that was the thing that I had to do. As a son--as a child--not a son, like gender didn't matter, as her kid, to be able to say "thank you." Like, I understand that you sacrificed everything for me, here's what I can give you back. So, that was my motivation for sure, my mom.

Often, the DSP share this empowering appreciation for their parent's sacrifices that led them to firmly believe they *had* to go to college to repay their family for all the sacrifices and struggles they faced to obtain an education. Rafael, for example, still remembers clearly how rude he acted the first time he met up with his mother after years of her living in the U.S. As a child, he reflects on how he had an ideal life in Peru until his parents made the decision to separate. His father and mother both had decent paying careers, which permitted his older brother and Rafael to attend private school. However, it would be the split that would change everything for Rafael and his older brother. To make ends meet, Rafael's mother moved to the U.S., leaving her two sons under the care of her

family in Peru. Understandably, Rafael did not understand his mother's sacrifices, so when the day he would meet up with his mother in the U.S. arrived, he was still very hurt by her. It was not until they arrived to the location where she was living that he realized she was not living the luxurious life he had pictured. It was then that he came to the realization that his mother's struggles were real and he owed it to her to pay her back for all her sacrifices. However, shortly after his arrival, Rafael would come to experience other barriers himself as an undocumented student attending public school in the U.S. within the state of Utah, which is predominantly White.

For many, this realization as to what it means to be brown in a predominantly White state came early on. Lili, for example, having moved to various schools allowed her to compare how she was treated not only based on language, as she was tracked into ESL courses most of her elementary years, but also based on what she would wear at school. She explained an instance when she wore a necklace with a cross that was not allowed and expressed how:

> ...they also banned the crosses from the students. Like they said it was gang-related. And so, I remember me and a group of my friends, we went out and we protested about that in the front lawn. We just didn't feel that it was fair that they were saying that that was gang-related, when it was a religious and a cultural symbol for us, so…

Lili was well aware of what it meant to be different but at the same time was also very courageous early on to act rather than react to such treatment through protest. For Eva, she also shares the first time she realized she was different early on based on her skin color as she states:

> ...Yeah, so it was like, damn like when I started Elementary school, you know it like, it all kind of started like I don't know. It was kind of like, we, there were very few Latinos in Heber you know. So I never really knew I was different until like this kid was like "hey why are your knees dirty?" It was like, 2nd grade and I

> was like “my knees aren’t dirty, you’re mean” and I was like “why are you saying that” and he’s like “look, look at my knees and look at yours. Mine are red and yours look, they’re brown” and I went home and I was like “Mom” -you know cuz I knew, like we speak Spanish and stuff but I was just like that’s normal like whatever you know and I was like “Mom, like this kid told me, you know my friend told me my knees are dirty” and she’s like “No, it's like you’re Mexican. You’re not dirty. You’re just different. You know.” It's okay to be different cuz I was like “why? Why are they doing this?”

For Eva, that experience could have been the turning point for shame if she did not have a mother to demonstrate resistance through calm confirmation to explain that her knees were not dirty but rather that she was Mexican and that meant she was different and it is fine to be different. It is through that reassurance that everything will be alright regardless of what others say, think, or do. I can definitely see how that experience inspired her to be the strong woman she is today. I was a teaching assistant in the ethnic studies class she was enrolled in, and since the 1st day she walked in, she had walked in with a strong awareness of who she was as a brown *mujer* so I definitely agree that she carried her mother’s reassurance into college.

For others like Luis, it was a bit harder to make sense of who he was all through high school as he shared, but what had hit him the most is when he found the limitations of being undocumented which meant he could not apply to college, he states:

> ...And you know, I…that's when me being undocumented also had a huge role in everything. I was like, “oh shit, actually-I don't have all this privilege that I thought I did, for some reason.” Umm I even thought that I could surpass the fact that I was not born in this country, that I did not have a Social Security number. Because of my work. You know, because my work will speak for itself. And that was kind of what my dad always taught me – you know like, make sure that no one ever questions the quality of your work, you know- as you don't want to give them an excuse to treat you badly or deny you anything. Umm, but that was a huge thing for me. You know, it's like, actually Luis, you ARE like those other Mexicans! Umm, and it was a huge kinda slap in the face…

This is a reality for many Students of Color who migrate to the U.S. with the full intent to

make their hopes and dreams of opportunities possible. However, in their intent to apply for college, those hopes and dreams get shattered further leaving students to question their future after high school as their opportunities are taken away.

Environment: The Diversity Scholars' Ethnic Studies Course

This section is focused on analyzing the environment *during* college for the students. Part of that includes understanding the impact of their 1st year of college in the DSP, particularly, in relation to the impact the race-based ethnic studies course had on the 10 participants I interviewed. Furthermore, I asked the DSP alumni what role, if any, did the ethnic studies course play out in the remainder of their years in college. As mentioned within the description of the course, the design of the course was well thought out as it incorporated much scholarly literature on retention, persistence, and graduation among several other components to support the academic success of Students of Color, utilizing race-based pedagogies. Throughout this chapter you will find various ways in which the DSP alumni spoke on the impact of the program and their experiences in the course.

Racial/Ethnic Identity: Living Brown in a White State

Earlier in this chapter, I shared some of the DSP alumni experiences in K-12 settings as Students of Color attending schools within a predominantly White state. Many shared experiences based on race, class, language, phenotype, undocumented status, among "other" experiences. This next section briefly discusses theories on the development of racial identity first in terms of critiquing the existence of student development as a "one size fits all" to further offer ways to best approach the multiple

intersectionalities Students of Color contribute to higher education.

For example, theories such as Helms' (1995) *Racial Identity Development Theory* explain racial identity in terms of stages. Alternative theories, such as poststructural feminism, argue that a static core gender identity does not exist and contest that gender identity is maintained through a socially coerced performance of gender. However, Leong (2002) argues that if feminism is only distinguished based on gender, then it still dismisses the brown skin, meaning People of Color. Therefore, acknowledgement of the various manifestations of oppression placed among People of Color must be considered along with their interconnectedness with other identity categories (Leong, 2002). In taking a theoretical departure that places racial identities as "levels" (Delgado Bernal, Alemán & Garavito, 2009) this study explores the theoretical contributions of early and contemporary U.S. Third World Chicana feminist scholars (Anzaldúa 1987; Pérez, 1999) to explore "how the physical, social, and discursive" in-between spaces "occupied by Chicana/o-Latina/o students can help construct their hybrid and fluid" (Delgado Bernal, Alemán & Garavito, 2009, p. 579) racial identities and racial consciousness, affecting their experience in higher education.

Within one of the protocol questions, I asked the students if their racial/ethnic identity description changed after taking the course, and for the most part they all stated yes, it did as Consuelo states:

> ... it definitely impacted myself, and how I define myself. Because before, umm, taking the class I think I had always been so unaware of like, identity. I mean I just saw myself as Mexican, but then when people would ask me like, "Oh are you Hispanic?" I'd be like, "yeah." You know, cuz to me there wasn't a difference… I saw it as all the same...And it wasn't until like getting, until taking that class that I was like, "Wait a minute, what am I?" like, "Who am I?" Like what do I actually want to, do I wanna consider myself a Chicana? Do I wanna like consider myself Mexican-American? Like who, what…And so I think that

> was when, it totally had an impact on how I identify. And so yes…I…. Umm. I just see myself as Latina. Umm yeah, I mean I know that I, even though sometimes I feel like I'm not because I'm like, "Oh, my Spanish sucks!" This and that, but I'm like "You know what, no I am! Like, it's not, you know it's the system! The system got Spanish out of me… I had to fit in." I don't know, but yes, I identify as Latina.

Consuelo's statement resonates with what other students expressed in terms of how they defined their race/ethnicity based on what was already placed on them prior to the course. Many stated how the general term Hispanic was all they knew until the course included literature on the term Hispanic along with what it means to be Chicanx, Latinx, among other terms. Additionally, Consuelo shares how she would often question her identity based on language and phenotype as many of her peers would express that she did not look Latinx due to her fair skin and because she spoke English well. Had it not been for the ethnic studies course, which provided literature that she had related to in being a light complexion Latinx whose native tongue was slowly erased due to dominant language, she would have embraced it as such and not been able to redefine her identity, language, and culture.

Micro Affirmation and Self-determination

In addition to the ethnic studies course reaffirming her race/ethnicity, language, and culture, Eva shares how the ethnic studies course was the driving force that kept her going in comparison to the other course she was taking that semester:

> ... I hated my other classes. The ethnic studies course was the one I looked forward to. I did all my homework. I did all the readings. Versus I think my first semester I took Political Science and I ended up getting like a "C –" or a "D" or something cuz I was just like "I hate this class like the professor is like this old White man and he's just an asshole that doesn't listen to anyone, you know. Versus like ethnic studies where it was like everyone's so like, you can talk about your experience. You can, you know, yeah and so I think the ethnic studies course

> was like I don't know the one I look forward to most so I tried every single year, every semester to try at least take one or two ethnic studies courses you know and I mean the minor goes fast, but I tried to because that was like the most fun class for me or it was like everybody says "take yoga, de-stress" but I was like I'll do that too, but it was like ethnic studies was like where I'd look forward to writing the papers. It was very, you know."

That "you know" assumption was because, as I mentioned earlier, I was a teacher assistant the year in her cohort so she states that I knew what the course offered because I was part of it. I can definitely attest to her always walking into class excited to learn new theories, participate, and learn more about her community, her language, and her experiences. Eva refers to the course as her therapy, which de-stressed her from the other courses she was taking that same year. Her description of her other class, such as political science, included stating that it was a big class and the only way she stood out was as a Student of Color because she was one of the few in comparison to the ethnic studies course where she not only felt welcomed but the professor wanted to know more about her, her experiences, and therefore she looked forward to the papers as most, if not all, the assignments had to do with her reflecting on her experiences and how she understood the readings based on her experiences.

However, that was not the case for Jamie who, while she was born in California, was raised most of her life in Utah. Jamie could no longer take living in a state where the population was White dominant. While she was not too excited to attend her local institution due to her wanting to get out, she was glad she did as it was the only course where she could pass with an A in comparison to her other courses that year as she states how she only stayed there her 1st year in college:

> ...No. My 2nd year, I didn't go to the [IMU] anymore. I stopped going because of things that were happening in my family and then I went through a really big depression phase where it lowered my grades and I almost lost my Dad and I lost

> my scholarship. I was still connected to a lot of the kids that I was in ethnic studies class so I would come to school just to see them during lunchtime, but then I'd go home because I didn't want to be at school. I didn't want to be at class so my 2nd year of college didn't really happen for me because I wasn't in college so then I decided to move out here to Los Angeles and then I attended [Community] College…No, they didn't understand sometimes like I wanted to just focus on school, but I was also expected to work so I'm only going to school full time and I also had to work almost full time cuz I was working like thirty to thirty-five hours in retail at that time and so I'd literally get out of school, get out of classes, go work, come home, study, go to sleep, and do the same thing all over again. And then I'm expected to help my Mom with bills because at that time they were really struggling with like money cuz I wouldn't get money until after like the school year had already started so you start in August and then they don't give you FAFSA until like September it's like how are you suppose to buy your books so my parents would struggle because they'd give me a thousand dollars to go buy text books and then they were a thousand dollars short so I had to work my butt off to raise that money to pay them so that when the scholarship money came in then I could keep it because if not then I'd have to give it all to my parents so that was a struggle and then I would have to come home every weekend. I came home every weekend because my Mom needed me to go help her with her 'tienda' (store) so she had her own business, but since my brothers didn't want to help or they were too small, my Mom expected me to come and help her at her 'tienda' so you had me at my Mom's business trying to do my homework and then I'm trying to 'asistir clientes' (assist clients) too so…yeah so my job was Monday through Friday and then on the weekends 'Sabado y Domingo' (Saturdays and Sundays) go to the indoor swap meet and go help my parents with their business and do my college work (laughs) so it was all of that and then when we started the ADELANTE service I was like the, the, Service Learning, sorry I was like freaking out cuz I was like how am I going to fit this into my schedule like I already have a lot of things to do so I had to quit the job that I was working at that time and get a more flexible, like retail job that would give me less hours because the other place they were a call center they would not…

Here Jamie shares the struggle of being a Student of Color helping to make ends meet for her parents while also trying to survive the hostile environment she had known most of her young life. While she helped her parents financially, her decision to not continue on with her 2nd year at the institution was beyond the course. As she had mentioned there were other conflicting matters that were distracting her from continuing higher education, such as her father's health. However, what is critical to point out are the friendships she built within that 1 year in the ethnic studies course. Jamie had developed strong

relationships with other Students of Color in the course that became critical for her as prior to that she did not have many friends of color. Jamie shares how in her K-12 experience, she did academically well and was often complimented for being so smart. And while they did not necessarily tell her directly for "being Hispanic" she knew clearly that was what they meant. Had she not been the only Student of Color in her advanced courses throughout her K-12 experience, there could be a chance that she would have had a better chance in persisting and graduating at IMU. This goes to demonstrate how critical it is for Students of Color to associate with other students they can racially/ethnically relate to.

However, there are other participants who shared the consequences they faced when being considered "smart" among their peers of color who were not enrolled in the same advanced courses. For example, Rafael, when I asked how about his racial identity, references a term the course introduces to express how he understood his K-12 experience:

> ...So it was interesting that – that entire, looking back on it, that entire notion of internalized racism was really big here among a lot of Latinos, People of Color that I went to school with, because again, the other Latinos who I went to junior high with, for example, would look at me and say, "why do you care so much about school?" Right? "You're just trying to be White". And I'd be like, "no!" And again, it was because of my mom, right? Like, I'm like, "no!" And I was really shy, so I wouldn't talk back, but in my head I was just like, you have no clue what I've been thru. You don't know what my mom has been thru. You don't know who I am, *punto*, right…Este, pero, again I was really shy and really nervous, so I just stood there, stuck thru it and uh so yeah, it took me until undergrad 1st year to really look back on my experiences and be like whoooooooa!.

This is a clear example of how Students of Color can internalize what it means to be brown or black as not caring about school based on what has socially been said about them. For Rafael, it took a personal toll and he felt he needed to justify his doing well in

school was as a result of his mother's struggles. The course was able to help him make sense of his experience and realize it was not an individual problem, which often blames the students, but rather a system that forced divisions between the "hard worker" and those that internalized what was expected of them.

Consuelo also expressed how she felt once she understood how the cracks within the educational pipeline affected those in her school who ended up dropping out or did not graduate, as she states:

> ...Yeah, and so that's why I'm always like man it's so like f'd up because I know that some people don't have the opportunities to like you know, some people can't go to like… Career Center after …I think that's what it was called, after school because you know they have to go to work or do you know something like this, it's umm I don't know, it's just so stupid…and you know…

The course provided Consuelo the tools to analyze some of the reasons why some of her classmates were never able to go into the "career center" because they had to go to work to help their family. Consuelo had made the connection from her classmates not working "hard enough" to realizing the "opportunities" being offered were not always accessible to all students.

The Critical Service Learning Experience with Adelante

Another reference to the impact of the course had to do with their Critical Service Learning experience. One common reflection I kept hearing throughout the interviews when I asked about their mentoring experiences as more than just service, is that it really spoke to them, as Eduardo stated:

> ...yeah, yeah. Definitely. I mean, I saw myself in those, you know in their shoes because it's just great to see someone who looks like you. Who's you know, who's older, who's taller, who can give you a different perspective. So like I saw myself in those little kids and I did make a lot of connections with the little kids

> and learned so much from them...

All DSP alumni completed their service hours as mentors with *Adelante* and for the most part as the former Service Learning Coordinator, if the students expressed being bilingual in English and Spanish on their information sheet, I would place them in a Spanish class. So many of the DSP alumni expressed how being in a Spanish classroom was definitely a new experience for them as it contradicted their own experiences.

All the students expressed speaking Spanish in the home. However when they went to school they had to immediately change their language as Consuelo stated, “I mean...you don’t speak Spanish to anybody.” For Consuelo, reflecting back on how she lost her native language had an emotional impact on her, as she expressed feeling shame because coming from only speaking Spanish in the home when she was younger, to not being able to communicate in Spanish, “I try to talk to my mom in Spanish but I think the thing that makes it harder is that I have three younger sisters who also speak English...” and that meant the Spanish slowly faded away from their home. Lili also shared the dominant language in her home:

> ...at home we've always spoken in Spanish, at least with my parents and my brother. My brother was starting to lose his Spanish when he was like 8, and so we made it a point to always speak Spanish at our home, no matter what. And so yeah, we've kind of gotten a little bit of Spanglish, but it's mostly Spanish. As far as school, I remember - it's interesting you remember certain experiences, but in elementary it was fine, I could speak Spanish to my friends and nobody really said anything to me. But in junior high, this specific junior high actually, I just felt it was really racist... They didn't allow me to speak Spanish to any of my friends in the class...

Being able to name part of their K-12 experiences so early on as racist provided her the advantage of understanding that it is a structural problem not an individual problem, therefore, never leaving her to question her race, language, and religion as Lili was

determined to prove everyone who doubted her wrong.

For Luis, though, mentoring through the *Adelante partnership* would be more than just a requirement. Luis was actually taken back by what he saw in his mentoring experience, a personal impact, especially in hearing the elementary Students of Color speaking their native tongue as he expressed:

> ...umm so at the time it really spoke to me as an immigrant child, it really took me back to my childhood, where like I didn't have access to that, I didn't have access to bilingual education, uh, I didn't feel like Spanish was valued in my classroom. Umm or my school in general. I felt like, umm so my language would be Spanish so I felt that the culture in my school was very anti-Spanish, Spanish was a marker of difference, of inferiority, of being stupid, of being dumb, and like to see these kids who I see myself in, being in a space where Spanish is like celebrated and Spanish is encouraged. It was like so great that I was like, oh my gosh! I wish I'd had that opportunity. Umm so you know- that, It was a very – like self-reflective? It was- it was a very unique experience for me. I was like, oh shit! I see a lot of myself in this, and a lot of this speaks to me. Umm, so I felt directly impacted by it. So that's kinda why I wanted to make a direct impact - because of it.

The course's direct impact on Luis was clear not only in terms of what the course had done for him but how his Service Learning experience watching other Students of Color embrace their culture and language spoke to him and allowed him to see himself in them. Luis was taken so much by his service experience that he continued his community involvement with the students in the classroom. He followed the same cohort of students for 2 years after his 1st year. Luis' experience speaks much more to the impact that Critical Service Learning engagement can have on the Students of Color serving communities of color. There was a reciprocal relationship between Luis and the Students of Color he mentored; the elementary Students of Color can identify and look up to another Student of Color attending college who also spoke Spanish like them while Luis was driven by the Students of Color who transmitted a sense of self and language,

something he wished he had growing up. It is the sense of supporting one another that made this relationship so powerful between both parties.

For Eva, she expressed the positive impact the course had on her and how it spoke to her as she describes but what she could not explain was some of her classmates' behavior that demonstrated disinterest in the course. Alemán and Gaytan, two former professors who taught the course, explore this disengagement and the uncertainty as to why some Students of Color are disengaged with the ethnic studies course. Much to their disbelief, Alemán and Gaytan (*in press)* expressed how they could not understand why a student in a course that critically engages Students of Color to reflect and value their experiences can be so disengaged with the literature and Eva further confirms this disbelief:

> The thing I didn't like was...A lot of people didn't take it serious because maybe they weren't interested I don't know or maybe they already knew the history of their, like their ancestors or where they, the country they come from, but to mmm like, it just pissed me off so bad like I would get really angry when people were like "this is so stupid" and I was just like how? This is like the most interesting thing I've ever been taught this far, right? When I was like eighteen like I was like how is that? Like, how is this dumb? Or how like other students not taking it serious I guess because to me it was like, I even like would talk to my brother sometimes and I would like be crying cuz I was like "I can't believe I didn't know this like how did I not know the history of Mexico before?" (sounds frustrated) you know? like it was just like I was just like in shock that like I hadn't been taught this or like I don't know so that was the part I didn't like was people didn't take it serious, but those of us that did it was like interesting conversations you know.

Eva struggled to understand why there would be Students of Color not taking in all there was to learn in the course. For Eva, finding out about the history of Mexico, her place of birth, at the age of 18, was heartbreaking. She could not believe she did not know this and shared what she learned in the class with her brother. Eva and her older brother have an amazing relationship together. He was the one who stressed the importance of going to

college as her mother had left it up to her to make her own educational decisions.

Most of the DSP alumni were the oldest sibling; Eva and Rafael are the only two students who identified as the youngest sibling. It is interesting to note the relationship between the siblings as well, considering the DSP alumni that identified as the oldest felt a huge responsibility for opening the doors to opportunities for their younger siblings while the DSP alumni who identified as the youngest shared how their older siblings really encouraged them to go to college.

The Tools to Navigate the Predominantly White Campus

Part of another major finding on the impact of the DSP ethnic studies course was that it provided the tools to continue navigating the remainder of their college years with confidence and the language to name their experiences. Eduardo was the only one out of all the DSP alumni interviewed that, while as the older brother and the first one to go to college, had made the hardest decision to live on campus and shares how hard it was for his mother to let him go considering the huge role he had; as he shares:

> ...yeah definitely. I mean when I said that I was going to move to the dorms, my Mom didn't believe me and so eventually she, you know, like a week before she was like "are you really leaving?" you know leaving the house? And I was like "I'm not leaving the house. I'm just going to the dorms and I can come every weekend and visit everyone". But it was, it was difficult because I felt like my mother especially, felt some type of, I don't know she, maybe I don't know she felt a little bit offended maybe and she was really sad and I think that was obviously the case but I also like, you know, just leaving the house its like a huge symbolic thing in our family 'cuz you don't- you never do that your suppose to be there for your family you know every single time. But even though I was not physically there, I was always helping my family umm you know doing translations, and going there every weekend doing some paperwork for them and stuff like that. So I was not physically there, but I was still right there and so…

There was no limit to the number of roles all DSP alumni played in their home. Whether

it was through translating, or in Erica's case, her decision to live at home instead of on campus had to do with the major role she played in providing transportation to and from school to her two younger siblings, as both of her parents worked. She often felt, as other DSP alumni expressed, a sense of responsibility to help them as they were helping her pay for her tuition. Within student development theories, never is there anything on the additional responsibilities Students of Color carry not because they are forced to but rather because their family plays a major role in their life and that includes their academic life. For example, as the oldest, Erica had to take on several responsibilities all while also being a college student, as she explains how it was hard but:

> ...Yeah, I mean I guess I wouldn't want that. Yeah no, I wish I didn't have those responsibilities cuz I still remember studying in the library one time and I was like, oh shit, I gotta go, I gotta pick up [her two siblings] and I remember driving home and being pissed, because I was like, yo, this isn't even my child! and I'm like stressed out because I'm late to pick this girl up! So I mean, but see I look back and I was like, oh God, I was so mean! Because we're raised with these sentiments, responsibilities, as a family. Which is good too, because I mean at the same time, we help each other, and I guess that gives us that structure to help our communities...

For Students of Color, the concept of just being a college student was often something they can never relate to. Erica gives one particular example she experienced when I asked her about her home responsibilities, and while she was honest in responding how there were days that she felt as though she wished she did not have all these responsibilities, it made her the caring, loving, and responsible person she is today. The concept of leaving family behind for college can be taken up in various ways. For Eduardo, there was comfort in knowing he was just a few minutes away to help out in the house over the weekend, while for other students such as Erica, home responsibilities often meant leaving home and trading help with family members such as leaving the library in a rush

to pick up her siblings with the understanding that this is what families do.

Overall, all DSP alumni demonstrated how the course allowed them to develop a stronger microaffirmation and self-determination, which was something they had never received from their educational institutions. For example, as an immigrant from Mexico, Eduardo knew he had to take full advantages of all the resources provided to him. As a child, Eduardo shared how he always had the desire to learn so much more than what was taught, as he states:

> ...but something weird that I have from the beginning was like an honest desire to just learn something. To like just learn as much as I could. Uhm. I was always studying about other countries and even when I was in Mexico, I was studying about the United States by myself and I felt that, you know, the international competition I guess. So I was always like just trying to learn as much as I could because I knew that if I wasn't studying someone else was doing it and I was always going to be disadvantage so like just that aspect of, just learning and working hard and things like that has guided my educational path…

Eduardo knew there was so much more to learn out there and if he did not take full advantage of such opportunities then someone else would. Regardless of all the disadvantages he would face in having to work extra harder than others, Eduardo's aspirational capital helped him continue onto completing Law School. Eduardo's resistance capital was also very empowering. To hear how while he knew others would view him as less than based on stereotypical assumptions, he demonstrated strength in carrying on regardless what others assumed. From how he was seen in K-12 to now in Law School, he is still portrayed as less than what he continues to achieve. For example:

> ...at the beginning it was a little bit tough because he actually didn't really help me to like challenge myself so when I went to talk to him about you know taking the Honors class that I talked to you about, the English 10, he actually said that I shouldn't take it and I actually, I talked to my English teacher and then we went to talk to another counselor who was the one who you know matriculated me in those three courses that I eventually took. So like he was not supportive at the beginning, but eventually when he saw that I could do the work then he was a

> little bit, he was proud that's how we, he basically said and we actually talk now… every time I go to [former H.S.], we talk about [his former H.S.] and things like that. But even to this point, he doesn't really know what I have done. He, actually the last time I talked to him he said "oh how was Salt Lake Community College?" and then I said "well I went to the [IMU]" and he doesn't even know that I you know that I'm in Law School at Northwestern so I feel like he still thinks about all of these expectations of me or achievements of me are a little bit lower well compared to like other individuals, but he knows that I've done okay, so…

While some of the DSP alumni shared their intentions of proving those who have doubted them wrong, Eduardo silently resisted to prove his high school counselor wrong without correcting him. Part of this decision can be understood by how the ethnic studies course empowered him to do well academically for his community not so much to prove them wrong. Eduardo believed his work should speak for itself and regardless of what others expected of him based on his appearance, he would keep moving forward in service of others like himself.

Output: Postcollege Outcomes

> Oh my, I mean like it changed my life! Yes, it like- I – ewww I'd be a lost puppy, if I was not in that class! (laughs) I think it gave me direction, not only in my life, like my personal life but like in my educational life. It really gave me, it wanted me to changed my life, it changed my world. I will never be able to see the world the same way because of that class... It has like a really special place in my heart... this became my favorite class. (Luis, 2015)

This last section of the findings is intended to demonstrate the outcomes of the DSP alumni, 5 to 7 years after the program to see where they stand and to see how they may continue to incorporate what they learn in the ethnic studies course, through the DSP, to their current careers, and/or current lifestyles. Findings will show various ways in which I analyze the racial/social consciousness the students expressed through their individual interviews and this is where I will also include discussions pulled from the

focus group as it summarized where they are today.

In incorporating the outcomes of the program after they have all graduated with their baccalaureate degrees can help to best support how the DSP empowered them to make the Primarily White Institutions (PWI) theirs to claim and how as a result, the ethnic studies course encouraged some students to minor and even major in ethnic studies. Rafael admits the ethnic studies course readings were hard, but:

> ... I loved it. It was super-intense... pero they were so frickin' interesting... t*odo el material*, wow, *lo absorbia* and I was like oh my god this is what I needed. So towards the end of the semester - and I'm not such an emotional person, but again like, una semana antes de que acabaramos [a week before finishing the course]- we had [all] classes together, they dimmed the lights and they played the spoken word piece by Mayda Del Valle called "Descendancy," and I started tearing up, and I couldn't stop it. The lights were off and no one saw me, right? but I was - wiping the tears off my face cuz it was such a powerful piece. That touched me and I think that brought it all together and helped me understand you know, my connection to the larger picture....

All DSP alumni shared a particular reading, activity, or video that had a tremendous impact on their life. And in addition to what was learned in the course, Consuelo states:

> ... having a professor, you know, Faculty of Color is very, like I feel like it's super important. Because I feel like, I don't know, and it just comes down to the whole like creating a space. I feel like, when you, if you're trying to learn something about, for example, about Critical Race Theory, you wouldn't want to learn it from like…a White person. Because like you're creating this space where like they don't fully understand it. They can, like they're welcome to be in it but at the same time like they don't really have a right to like come in and be like, "Well I know everything and I am, I'll teach you about your experiences." It's kind of, I don't know, it just makes it difficult. But I'm not saying that obviously you cannot have a space…you know as long as, everybody is welcome! But at the same time, yeah, I don't know, it's very complicated…

When asking the SOC if they had any recommendations, Consuelo expressed how she could not have imagined feeling safe or comfortable if it had been a White faculty member teaching and further found it even more difficult to answer whether it should be inclusive to White students. Consuelo's hesitance in providing a space for White students

within programs such as DSP was common for other participants as they shared how it was already hard enough to feel comfortable with sharing among other SOC who did not appreciate the course. The thought of including White students in the DSP would more than likely limit their in-class participation.

Other DSP alumni shared how they continued engaging with communities of color, while others shared how they incorporated language or literature taught in the course within their workspace to best address the People of Color they were serving. Additionally, one thing that cannot be denied were the strong friendships all the DSP alumni built and the networking opportunities they formed with others. The DSP gave them the self-determination to survive through all odds placed against them. As learned through the course, they still had to break through the social constructions unjustly placed on them not only for themselves but their families and communities. Furthermore, this section hopes to understand how the DSP, through the ethnic studies course, nurtured or empowered students' academic success and achievement.

Making the PWI Theirs to Claim

An interesting analysis was on the question of whether the DSP alumni felt as if they were part of the university. Some made it clear that the only spaces within the university where they felt welcomed were sites concerned with providing services on the needs of Students of Color such as the CESA office, LGBT Resource Center, among other offices. As Luis states when I asked him if he felt he was part of the university:

> ....Umm….I would say probably not, because… thinking about any other friends that I still have from college - they're all somehow related to that [ethnic studies] class, they are all somehow related to CESA which is the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs. Umm, they're all connected to the LGBT Resource Center. Umm,

> so if it wasn't for these kind of really awesome classes, or resource centers on campus, I probably would not have had any friends really, or maintained any friendships after college…

Had it not been for the friendships he built, which I will cover later, he would not have felt as though he belonged to the university. More importantly, his continued support after his 1st year was collected through his involvement in CESA and LGBT centers, which are often also centers not fully recognized from the mainstream university.

For others such as Eduardo, he made it clear that it was through the course, which connected him to MEChA, which is located in the Center for Ethnic Student Affairs (CESA) office, along with other offices, where he built relationships along with the Honors College as he answers:

> ...I did feel part of the University and I think the… I think the three reasons why or the four reasons why it was because, first of all, because of MEChA. Because you know, we were always doing something on campus and off campus, and because of the ethnic studies course, and because of the Honors College. I think those things like just opened my, you know, my mind to different things and there were my friends they took me to the football games, which before I had no idea what, you know, I never went to a football game before and I was just, I was always involved in anything, you know. I also did Service Learning and I did uhm the Pre – Law certificate, like I said. I forgot the actual program. I mean I did a lot of stuff so like that helped me to connect with the school and I did feel part of the school.

Eduardo was very confident in stating he felt part of the university but as he mentioned, it was through all the offices designed for Students of Color to feel part of the university that welcomed him. Had it not been for such resourceful programs, there is no way of telling if he would have felt the same or if he would have been living there all through college.

As for Eva, after taking the ethnic studies course, she was able to compare how the faculty of color in the DSP would discuss the same literature in comparison with her

sociology class; as she explains:

> ...oh yeah! And like. I mean we even read more about umm some authors I, I can't think of it right now like you said you feel blanked, but some authors that we read my 1st year I would read again in say like a Sociology course, but it was like totally kind of, I would get something different out of it right because it wasn't from a professor of color it was from someone else. But I'd be like "oh have we ever looked at it this way" you know, so I think it helped me also to be able to be like "yes I am speaking up in class." I was more confident like nobody's going to like make fun of me or something you know it helped me with my confidence I guess at my, at like, an academic level like. Yes, because I, I guess at first in ethnic studies I was kind of afraid to speak up at first because I was like maybe I didn't read this right, maybe it's not what it means, but it was like yeah, this is what it means. I got to be confident in what I'm getting from the reading right? So it definitely helped me.

Eva's second guessing in her ethnic studies class demonstrates how she was not used to literature that spoke of her in an asset-based way, and therefore, she was hesitant to share at first, but the course helped her find the confidence to speak back. Eva was able to see the different ways a reading can be interpreted by faculty of color in comparison to a White professor. The ethnic studies course provided her with the tools to fully engage in other classes outside of the DSP; it also helped her speak back and demonstrate that the voices of Students of Color need to be more represented and acknowledged among White faculty.

Jose, on the other hand, would go back and forth as to what it meant for him to be located in these White spaces after the ethnic studies course. For instance:

> Yeah, I think it was sacrifice right, persistence of sacrifice, being ok with my parents not really knowing what I'm doing or my family not understanding exactly what I'm doing. Umm you know giving up a little bit of that. Umm you know like obviously, going to a predominantly White class, your personality changes, you have to put on another mask and kind of act and talk like them, entonces it allowed me to be comfortable again with being that and doing that, because sometimes I would feel like a fake, like I was like, not, again, not really belonging to any like college culture or my family culture. Which allowed me say, "ok, these are sacrifices I need to make for me to not only help myself, but my community around me. By me getting a college degree, I will help the people

> around me". It's kind of like a wave - it hits other people without really me knowing.

For Jose, he had to constantly remind himself that being in these uncomfortable spaces instead of being surrounded by loved ones where he can be himself, meant sacrifices discomfort knowing it will pay off without him ever really knowing who and how. Being in spaces where he was the only Student of Color, for him meant "putting on a mask" meaning a self-defense mask where he would use their same language to speak back to them.

Ethnic Studies as a Minor/Major

There were a total of 5 DSP alumni out of the 10 who received a minor in ethnic studies and one who chose to major in ethnic studies as it became available shortly after some had already declared their majors or were closer to graduating as Eduardo explained:

> ...I didn't have to take classes to continue to learn about the topic uh, I was also doing it by myself, studying by myself and just having conversation with other people, uh you know that were studying that subject, ethnic studies. I talked to [former ethnic studies classmate] and asked him if they were going to have like a major in Ethnic Studies or Chicano Studies, but back in the day they didn't have anything, they you know, eventually they started the minor in Ethnic Studies, but you know, by that time I was already, you know, I was already on my way to graduate and stuff like that, so I didn't have the option to take those classes.

As part of the first cohort, Eduardo stated there were not many undergraduate courses offered after the 1st year. However, he continued to do his own research on the experiences of People of Color, while also asking former DSP alumni who he knew were interested in getting an ethnic studies minor but were very limited due to it not being offered. For him it would have been too late to minor in ethnic studies as he was getting

ready to graduate.

For the DSP alumni who indeed continued taking ethnic studies course, the experience was not the same as the one from the DSP as the course had a few Students of Color and other students were White and took the course as a diversity requirement as he stated:

> ...So like I said, in some of my ethnic studies courses that were not the cohort, I didn't feel like - I don't know, it was scarier to speak up, because some of the students there did not agree they were just there to get their diversity requirement, so you'd have to choose your battles. You know what I mean? And it was just so draining. So to have like a safe space like that, I don't think it should be changed, I think it should remain for Students of Color. I mean, that's just what I found the most beneficial for me, it just felt like a safe space, we could say anything we wanted, we didn't have to censor ourselves. And sometimes in other classes I feel like, yeah, you, like, I tried my best to just speak out but that's just sometimes I just don't want to go there today. And, so it would get really draining, so that's what I found really awesome about this course…

Luis' response comes from me asking him what he enjoyed the most from the ethnic studies course and if he had any feedback on it. For Luis, it was critical to hold a space within ethnic studies courses where it is reserved for Students of Color only, because otherwise it would just be like any other course where Students of Color leave the course feeling silenced or having to choose whether or not to speak up in regard to others' comments and or assumptions on Students of Color. As he stated, other ethnic studies courses forced him to choose his battles, which was draining whether he spoke up or not because at the end of the day his resistance whether it be silent or spoken, still took a toll on his body.

A perfect example of the fear it can cause when Students of Color do not feel safe is Rafael's experience when he choose to speak up in another class and the fear it had on him after class as he walked away:

> ...1st semester of college as an undergrad of course, este, I was [also] in the LEAP class, I was able to look at both classes [ethnic studies and LEAP] with, like, two different lenses. In this particular LEAP class, I guess another point that really connected to like my experience with like the class was that we were reading a book- no, that was 2nd semester, so after I had read some of the readings and we had already discussed it in [the ethnic studies] class. Second semester we had a book in the same LEAP class on immigration where we talked about immigration and people kept talking about "illegals." So here I was, an undocumented student, sitting in the class - no one knew I was an undocumented, right? People tossing the word "illegal" back and forth, around me, I was... I'm really, I'm soft-spoken when I speak, and I used to not speak at all, right? And I even dared to like say something - I can't remember what it was now but I remember speaking out. And uhm, and leaving the class shaking, like physically shaking, like I was, like… And connecting that to the racial battle fatigue, este the articles we were reading, and I think that was another moment where it clicked. I was like, yep! (laughs)

This frightening experience serves to demonstrates how for Students of Color, it is not only a matter of having the courage or feeling empowered enough to speak back but also at what expense. As he walked home in fear for declaring his 'undocumented' status to a class where he did not feel safe, reminded him that this cannot be taken for granted. This is often the class for SOC who are vulnerable in other spaces yet feel that there needs to be some sort action to speak back to the unconscious statements spread in the class, but at whose expense? While Rafael was taken back with fear of others in the class thinking he was nothing other than an angry person or "illegal" taking the discussion way too serious and further disregarding it by the 2nd week of class, and then what? This is the risk SOC take in speaking back. It was the ethnic studies course that provided Rafael with the tools to name his experience as he shared his connection in reference to Racial Battle Fatigue, a theory developed by Smith (2008) and introduced in the course.

Erica also had an awakening related to her attempting to assimilate all through high school as she shares:

> ...I think I was really trying to assimilate. I went to a White high school, you know, and I think I also was like, "Oh, I'm not like THOSE Mexicans." I

> remember saying that one time. And reading in an article - can't remember, it was one of our readings where people write about these feelings - I was like, "My God, I was that girl!" But now you won't - it's so funny, because even my cousins from Mexico they were asking me questions, they were like, oh, you're so different compared to like – uhm, like my other cousins, you're so proud to be Mexican, you're so proud of where your parents came from!, like. I think that's so great. My cousin was like, where do you get this from? I think it's from them, but at the same time I think - I told them about ethnic studies and how CESA, there was CESA and how we could go there and talk about our experiences, and how we were like, we shouldn't be ashamed of where we came from. Like me and Luis would always have heart-to-hearts about it, like no, they're shaming us. And Now, now I'm in a better place about my race. I'm not ashamed of it at all and I think that is the most important part too - not being ashamed. Like, they shamed you into wanting to be like them.

Erica was the only DSP alumni who was born and raised in Utah with roots from Mexico but her family had been living in Utah for over 40 years as it was easier to get a social security card during the arrival time of her grandfather. Throughout her childhood, Erica expressed the difficulties of being a brown Catholic girl in an LDS state but how her parents, while having lived there for so many years, enforced the importance of teaching their children Spanish and their family culture that kept her grounded at home but battled it at school. It was not until she walked into the ethnic studies course that she was so shocked to see so many SOC and was immediately drawn to the ethnic studies class. What was interesting though was the reaction she had the following day as she entered her 2nd class:

> ...I took sociology. I still remember that class was full and the, believe it or not the first thing I noticed was, everybody was White (Laughs) I was like, what is happening? where are all the other students? And I was sitting down between these little blonde boys that spoke Portuguese. They had just come home from a mission or something, and they were like the whole time speaking in Portuguese, and I was like, shut up! You're not Brazilian! (Laughs)

For having been born and raised in Utah, Erica's parents unconscious ingrained the importance of their culture by listening to Spanish music and enforcing the Spanish

language, which is what allowed her to survive her K-12. Had it not been for her parents and in college, the DSP program, Erica expressed that her identity would have been lost in the pressure of assimilating to the dominant culture.

Ana was another student who, as a business major, did not continue taking any other ethnic studies courses. She was glad for the one course she took during her 1st year of college since it allowed her to navigate what would be the remainder of her college years with the right language and tools to speak back as one of the few, or in some cases the only, female of color in a space dominated by White males. Ana shares:

> ...Yeah, no, and there were so many issues that came up in the business program, that if it hadn't been because of the ethnic studies class my 1st year, I wouldn't have known how to like handle that, or deal with that, or like even how to respond. So that was so helpful!...

This is another example of the major impact just one ethnic studies course had on Ana as she continued with her degree in business. In asking her what role the ethnic studies course played during her remaining years, it was interesting to her how she also shared the impact it had on her health as she responded:

> ...Yeah, and on my health also. You mean like all those attacks you get on campus? How would you – I mean because I learned how to deal with that I wasn't internalizing all of them. And, I mean I wouldn't say I defend myself, but I make people, I let people know that whatever they said was wrong. So I had one of my professors in my upper division marketing classes - it was- this is like a core class, this is a marketing management, you cannot graduate from the marketing department without taking this class. So it's that important, you usually take it your last year. So I was in the class and we were breaking up into groups, and the professor said, you know "One Student of Color per group." Because we had a lot of international students from China. And he was separating us because a lot of them didn't speak English that well, and so he didn't want a group to end up with 3 international students – cuz it's a lot of work for them to figure it out. So he was trying to do that and I actually formed my group with Latinos, right and we had one Asian student. And so we're like, ok you know, we have the international student in our group, so, and that was the Asian kid that we had. And he comes to our group and tells us that we cannot all be in the same group, because we are all international students. And we were like, "no, we were born

> here, we live here! We've all gone through school here, we are from here"! And he just looks at us and he's like, "Do you speak English?" right- and he points at me. And that was just so offensive. Cuz it's like, how else would I be in an upper division marketing class without speaking English? I just like- did not understand it. I just looked at him and I was like, "I do - how about, Doctor whatever- Do you speak English?" And he was so shocked that I asked him that, but it was just as out of place for me to ask him that, as it was for him to ask me. And, I guess he just smiled and walked away, right. So it's like… I guess people have to be very careful about what they said around me because they knew I would always point it out. And that was just because I had taken the class and I knew what to call it. And so it was really helpful, you know- when you get microaggressions not to make it about yourself. Be like, 'Oh, maybe"- you know- not blaming yourself, I'm not good enough. It's just like, "oh, this person is just not culturally intelligent. It's not my fault. I'm not gonna worry about it. Just gonna let it go…

Again, Ana could name her experience based on literature learned in the course such as microaggressions where it is not her problem but rather society's lack of knowledge on others' race/ethnicity and their cultures. And while she was well aware of the importance of doing well in the marketing course, which would determine her completion of the major, she also felt it was necessary to speak back without thinking much about the consequences. Ana's 1 year experience was enough to help her survive the remainder of her academic years in a major that constantly challenged her as a woman and in a field dominated by White males. Consuelo can also relate to Ana's experience as she was also often challenged not only by White males but by not fitting in within the White women sharing a space within the field of engineering. Much of it is due to the material she was introduced in the ethnic studies course, as Consuelo expressed:

> Yeah. And, (sigh), then I'm always like talking, I'm always, I always think that it's just… when you are like aware of a lot of the things in society, it's…I feel like for me as a brown woman trying to be in engineering it's hard to be like friends… with White women, and stay friends with them. I don't know what it is, and it's not like, I'm like "Oh, it's cause she's White!" Or, you know, it's not like that, I always think about the race thing in the back of my head or any of, I don't know, I don't what it is… So in my... in the other departments where my classmates were all White, for some reason, like I can't maintain that friendship because I feel like it's so fake. And I just, like no matter how hard I try to like

inform them on what I, like, it just doesn't…

For Consuelo, it was difficult for her to build a sincere relationship with her White female classmates as for them the only problem that concerned them was their gender and through the ethnic studies course, Consuelo knew there was more to it than gender since for her it was also a matter of race. However, in a space where their gender is already being questioned, bringing in matters of race was even harder. However, it is fair to state how this course made it possible for Consuelo to survive such spaces as she was able to differentiate what mattered to others and stand her ground as to what mattered to her as well, regardless of what others believed to be more concerning, such as gender as being more important than race, something I am not sure she would have been able to interpret had it not been for the DSP.

"Somos Como Uña y Tierra": Friendships Established Through the Diversity Scholars Program

Another great example of how the DSP was able to nurture and empower students' academic success and achievement was through the lasting friendships the students established through the ethnic studies course. For many, it was the relationship they created in the classroom that helped them survive their remaining college years. Luis and Erica's relationship was one I witnessed personally as I would interact with them at their service site or whenever they would participate in the *Adelante* field trips. When asked about how their friendship developed in the course, Luis states:

> ...ok yeah so one of my really close friends, uh was Erica. And so I met her and we still keep in touch. And uh, it was cool to meet other people. Cuz even though this is a very emotional experience for me, and very new, it was really cool to know that I wasn't the only one that believed in meritocracy. I wasn't the only one

> that had internalized racism. You know- It was really cool to share that and process that with people. You know, so I can, after class we'd walk together like oh my god, and talk about the class and discussions, and things that we learned, and we went thru our phase where we would call everything out, and everything was- that's racist!, that's oppression! – that's, ta ta da, you know, we were like these children who learned something new and used that fancy word all the time, umm like Pedagogy, Pedagogy! Oh my God, that was like my favorite word! Umm, you know stuff like that. It was really, really cool to share that with people. Umm, but [Erica] would, she's definitely the one that stands out the most, umm you know there's other people like umm, her name is umm [another DSP alumni participant] you know she's getting married; one of my really best friend, [another DSP alumni] she wasn't in my cohort but she was the one that's a year ahead of me, she just finished law school, and so there's definitely connections that I still maintain with those people, yeah…

Meeting other Students of Color, who, once introduced to the course could relate to feelings of guilt for falling into what he defined as internalized racism, was major. Luis shared how prior to his 1st year in college, he was ashamed to identify as Mexican, for he was told it had a negative connotation. Once he found out there were other SOC in the course who also shared the same experiences, they were able to make sense of it and move forward with interrogating everything else that was told of their lives and experiences. His passion for learning these "fancy" words transpired more than that and it became a tool or survival mechanism for the remainder of his college as he and other DSP alumni were able to call out racism and name their own experiences.

For Eva, she expressed how she could go to college with the same friend whom she has known since preschool in Head Start. So while she value the presence of her long time friend, the course allowed her to meet other SOC, as Eva expressed:

> ...What I liked was that when I came to the university, I didn't know anyone except my friend... but we were in completely different majors. She never did ethnic studies or anything but we were like I don't know, you know she made a lot of friends but I was like I'm meeting other Students of Color that I've, you know, I liked being around, like at the same time people didn't take it serious, but I liked being around those people who were very serious about it and about their education and they had long term goals similar to mine you know what I mean,

like, that's what I loved…

For Eva, the DSP course allowed her to make friends just like her friend but she noticed most of her friends were particularly Students of Color. These friends of color, in addition to having relatable experiences, also identified common long-term goals of returning to their communities to better serve them. However, Eva did not want her long time friend to miss out on the benefits of associating with other SOC so she shares the time after attending a national conference and feeling so empowered by it that she wanted her friend to experience the same and convinced her friend to attend a MEChA meeting:

> ...I went to nationals... and then there was only seven 'Mechistas' at the time and I, we were [preschool friend] and I were like roommates and I was like... "'you have to go to M.E.Ch.A." Like I came home crying from nationals cuz I was like that was so powerful for me and she's like "I don't want to go I'm shy like it's stupid" and I was like you don't even know what it's about just go... so it was her second to last she started to go with me and by that time I was co-chair and I had kind of been like, I sat down with the officers and I was like we need to be more approachable, we need to fix this like people are scared of us on campus. It's like why the hell are they scared you know, so now there's forty members, it's huge! and [preschool friend] was like a part of it uhm I kind of had to like lay low for a while because I needed to focus on graduating but she now she's like conscious and is aware of what I'm talking about and actually when I graduated she told me "you know what, she's like thank you for telling me to take Chicano Experience with you. Thank you for forcing me to go to M.E.Ch.A. cuz she's like it opened my eyes and I'm like I told you I was like, I told you, "ignorance is bliss" cuz you're like "there's no problems, there's, there's nothing"...

While both Eva and her friend were enrolled in the ethnic studies course, it was clear that the course had a stronger impact on Eva than it did on her DSP classmate and long time friend. Consequently, her friend did not reap the benefits of associating with other Students of Color early on after the 1st year in the DSP but luckily her strong friendship with Eva encouraged her to engage in critical discussions and continue her involvement while Eva had to step away from the association due to family matters.

Rafael also shared the role the DSP and the ethnic studies course played. In

particular, it was his favorite course by far as an undergrad as he explains:

> ...So great question! So, 1st semester, este como se llama [how do you call it], definitely this was the class that stood out to me the most out of all of them. Even up to date, whenever they ask me like you know what was the best class I've ever taken, ethnic studies, 1st semester, 1st year of college! Straight up! Like, I've never taken a class as good as that one, that one changed my life completely. Uhm, so este, so, I think again you know, Villalpando's piece on like self-segregation, self preservation, I think that I really maybe unconsciously took that to heart and the following semesters we would try to like take it with like a few others, maybe not intentionally, or intentionally, or I don't know, but we would end up taking classes together. Uhm, and yeah, whether it was in sociology or general classes, just to have that support, I guess right? Pero most of my classes were like, definitely I was one of the few, yeah...

Rafael always knew he had more to offer but did not have the language to carry out such conversations until the ethnic students course, as he mentioned and referred to a specific article that spoke to him. With the intentions to live up to the article, Rafael and a few other DSP alumni made sure to enroll in the same courses to support one another as Villalpando (2003) suggested how SOC that associate with other SOC have a better chance of academic success and achievement.

Rafael and Jose's friendship grew out of their carpool assignment which makes me extremely happy as I was in charge of making sure all the *Adelante* mentors not only had a classroom placement based on language but also transportation to the site. When I asked Jose if he developed new friendships as a result of the program he responds:

> ...Yeah, if it wasn't for the Service Learning component, so- we [Rafael & Jose] carpooled together- If it wasn't for that Service Learning component, I don't think we would have been friends. We hated each other at the beginning, so it was kind of like, "ok, this is just, you know, I'm gonna give you a ride, we're gonna talk, entonces...uhm, that's how we ended up talking up more and then he was interested in community-based work, entonces that's when I started "ok", you know – cuz again, like I was from the west side, from like the "ghetto", he was coming from [Rafael's high school], which is like more rich and more prestigious high school. So, you know- I had my first initial reactions like you know- "your Latino wanting to be…" and he's like imp "I'm Peruvian!" (laughs). Yeah, so I was like, "Who is this guy?". So, uhm so with him, uhm with other students, I, off

> and on, not closely, pero, I definitely - we have lunch once in awhile with other students that I met from the program.

Hearing this was like music to my ears as I was always curious to know if my carpool placements ever created friendships considering the students would have to be in a car every week for 11 weeks. To know they did not like each other at first based on their high schools to then developing a friendship based on their interest in doing community work was very nurturing to hear and empowering to know.

Networks

The DSP program also opened the doors to many networking opportunities, which included access to faculty of color, advisors of color, peer-mentors of color, graduate Students of Color, programs that served Students of Color such as the *Adelante Partnership* or university programs, communities of color, other Students of Color among many other relationships. Eva shares how the DSP provided her the opportunity to network with others as she states:

> ...yeah, and I mean I have like, you know, like most of the mujeres from '*Adelante*' that we work with I consider them, you know, you, my friends like and you're all my, like my motivation, like I'm like damn Judi [me] is a mom and she's getting her Ph.D.! Hell yeah! Like I'm like I can do all of that! You know…

Eva's statement came as a surprise as when I had interviewed her, I was approximately 5 months pregnant and it had never occurred to me the role I played as a Chicana mother completing a PhD. It was empowering to hear that the importance of networking was more than professional networking but it also developed stronger relationships many undergraduate SOC hardly find among many networks.

For Jamie, having so many bad experiences and interactions with school officials

throughout high school toward identifying a DSP advisor of color as an approachable and resourceful counselor can also speak to the networks of the DSP. As Jamie expressed:

> ... my CESA counselor would always say hi to us like when we were at lunch they'd be like "hey what's up" you know and so you felt like you were included. That was the little bit of inclusion that we ever got at the [IMU]. I don't know if that's what it's like anymore cuz I'm not there but I feel like every time I look at Facebook the same group of students who I went to this class with they still hang out together you know they stuck around together because that's all we had you know we only had each other…

Jamie's reflection spoke truth to how most of the DSP alumni within each cohort have remained friends even after college and many attended each other's weddings, baby showers, graduations and professional events. Eduardo, for example, states:

> ...Yeah most of my best friends in College were in that class actually, I still talk to everyone when I see them and you know in Facebook I basically talk to like you know, I don't talk to a lot of people in Facebook but you know I'm keeping in touch when I go to Utah. I try to meet with them and stuff like that so we are having communications, yeah.

Eduardo admits that while he might not talk to all the DS he has as friends on his Facebook, there is still that connection as the ethnic studies course carried a safe space for many of the DSP alumni. Consuelo was able to network with another journaling program created by SOC for SOC, and this is how she expressed her involvement:

> ...I got involved with,"[journal]."And um, I'm not involved with it anymore, but I made friends during the time that I was, you know, working with *[Journal]*. And I'm still really good friends with some of the friends that I made there. And a lot of them, and also some of the people from my class, who like, I still talk to.

The strong ties many made as a result of the DSP and the ethnic studies course speak much to the role the program played not only academically but also how they could meet others either interested in the same topics or just experiencing the same as SOC that further strengthens their relationship even after college.

Career Choice and Graduate School

Lastly, in terms of where most of the DSP alumni were 5 to 7 years later is very telling as they all had graduated before or during same year they were interviewed. All DSP alumni had earned their baccalaureate degrees between the 4-6 year period and 6 out of 10 went on to graduate school during various time periods but there were over 7 of them who were offered to continue with graduate school but decided it was not for them at the time.

Eduardo went on to get his Juris Doctor degree at Northwestern University School of Law but during the time I was interviewing him over Skype, he was in Seattle for the summer doing a summer associate position and he since then graduated from Law School in 2016. Both Rafael and Jose continued working together doing community-based work while also completing their Master's degrees in an Educational Leadership and Policy department and graduated May of 2016.

Since his involvement in the DSP and *Adelante,* Luis continued to be engaged with communities of color one way or another but in getting accepted into a PhD program right after graduating with his baccalaureate, Luis expressed his reasons for not continuing with the PhD program:

> ...Yes, so right after graduation I started my PhD program at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and because I came straight thru as an undergrad, I had to get my Masters on the way, so it was a Masters PhD program. The 1st year consisted of my Masters program, which I successfully completed. But it was a very, very difficult year. It was a huge life-transition, personal transition, academic transition, umm that I wasn't prepared for, and the academy ended up being something totally different than I anticipated. And I was very unhappy, very miserable; I was depressed, anxious, and I was not alone in that struggle (laughs). I know that a lot of my colleagues were experiencing a lot of that. I was no longer happy doing what I was doing, umm, but…

Luis' ability to make the tough decision of not continuing on with the PhD program is

admirable, as he knew what he wanted and often society dismisses how work is needed everywhere. The traditional concept of theorizing without praxis often does not speak to many SOC and they are eager to get involved and take active action for change. It was rewarding to hear how he continues to be involved in serving communities of color. As Luis states:

> ...And so you know- all throughout college I did a lot of community service with the Utah Rape Center and the Utah AIDS Foundation. So that informed a lot of my community work around HIV working with Latino MSM, which MSM is Men who have Sex with Men and so that's really where I built my groundwork for how I ended up where I am today. You know- but that always was just kind of my community work, like that's - I love doing that. So it was always a volunteer basis. And then once I was like ok, I'm not happy with my PhD program, what can I do that will make me happy and that will make me feel like I'm actually making a direct impact? Umm, beyond theory, beyond knowledge production, I was like, you know what, I really enjoy working with people! Like real life people. Umm and I want, at that time, I felt like, I know what I can do with my degree. At this time I was like, if I go to an interview, I can say I know how to read, I know how to write, and I know how to think. Like I really felt those were my only qualities at that time, cuz that's all I felt that the academy was asking of me to do, read, write, and think. Like, I felt like I was a machine. But then I remembered that I really enjoyed- you know- working with people, on the ground. And I had lots of HIV and STI experience, so I might as well go with what I know, what I'm comfortable with, and what I know that I enjoy.

This was very telling of where Luis' passion stands which is in being out on the ground doing the work that often does not get recognized. I am so glad he was able to do what he enjoys while also being resourceful to others through community engagement. Eva also described feeling the same way in the work she did at the community site she worked for; as she expressed:

> ...so I kind of see that like I don't know I just feel good when I do community service and it might be hard I mean my work right now is very challenging, but at the end of the day I'm like you know maybe that one phone number of a clinic I gave somebody is going to help them or that one voucher that we gave somebody for a mammogram is going to change their life... I think it's important like just as a community you have to kind of help each other and a lot of people forget that right so yeah it's just kind of, I think that's the way I was raised. You always give

back…

The concept of *giving back* has been expressed among all the DSP alumni, whether it was giving back to their parents, communities, siblings, or other students. It was never a selfish approach as to why they succeeded academically and continued to achieve much more through their selfless way of approaching life.

For Rafael, in addition to attending grad school he had also became a DSP Advisor under CESA and states:

> Well… I love it. I like, it's, I've had the chance to be an advisor with CESA you know, overseeing basically throughout the years I've seen the progression – or actually, forgive me for saying this pero like *la resvalada que se a dado el programa por que* [the slippery change of the program] they don't assign as many readings as they used to, like they print the stuff for them and hand it out, like if they really wanted to – you know like the way they taught us to navigate the system, like, you figure it out, you go figure it out! you go print your readings, you go talk to this – you know, that really pushed me to be on my toes every day, or – in the classroom being like, if you didn't do your readings, you can't get out, like why are you here?, right. And it's just like, like holy crap, this is serious, like this is college, like I need to be here, *punto* [period]! So that was incredible, the requirements - push 'em up! Or like keep them like, you know, cuz I know that the year before we started, they were even harder. You know because I think we were in the 2nd cohort and I loved my cohort. It was a perfect challenge. I mean this idea of we need some challenges in school. You don't appreciate it as much - they print the readings for them, they bind them for them, *hay las tienen* [they have ready] for them. Its like shhhh, that's not how I learned to navigate the system to figure out where free printing was, to figure out where cheap printing was – to figure out you know, how much it would cost, to like talk to my friends, to like you know build those networks of like "I'll bring the readings this week, you can bring the readings next week" este you know, let's talk about the readings here and there, you know.

As a formal DSP alumni who became an advisor of color for the DSP, his points were very valid as he shared what it was like to be SOC in the class and witnessing how slippery it has become for the new generation of SOC in the program. He describes how the readings were handed to them when for him he was forced to be out there figuring things out on his own and creating that dialogue with others as a sense of support.

While Jamie did not complete her education at IMU, she took the tools learned from the ethnic studies course into her career department and expressed how she was glad she had that background knowledge as it has helped her in her field. She expressed how:

> ...my Supervisors they're both White, but they're like so racially aware of everything! Like I've never met women like them that advocate for minorities so much like they do. They are truly like exemplifying. I don't even know how to explain it. I love my Supervisors! And then all my co-workers would be talking about you know something that happened on the news like the black lives matter stuff that's been going on like we talk about it and all my like colleagues we all kind of seem to be on the same page about the same racial issues and all that stuff so I love it!

While her work site was in California she was glad a state such as Utah would prepare her to be on the same page with her White supervisor on matters regarding race and that made it easier to work, as she felt extremely comfortable in her work environment. However, when it came to working with the police department, she shares:

> ... its not the same thing like sometimes I have to go on home visits and if we're getting a student in for our program I have to go and assess their home and see their environment they live in because we want to see what their life, their home environment is like and so I took a Police Officer with me and she was a former Marine and she is also a Latina, but she grew up middle class and she grew up you know in Oceanside where its predominantly White people and stuff like that so she doesn't see what I grew up with and so we went to the home visit and you see poverty and you see all these *pañales* (diapers) and there's food and everything, rugged couches, and there's loud music playing and when she came out she's like "do people really live like that? Like where did you grow up?" and I'm like "I grew up in poverty and she was like obviously its not like this but I did" and she's like "wow I didn't know people lived like that" and so I told my supervisor I was like "I feel like this will be a really good experience for them because they've never been exposed to this" I was like "they're ignorant to it" and even though the Police Officer I work with is Latina she has that light skin tone, she grew up middle class so she has privileges that these kids are not having and so she doesn't see this. She doesn't see it as a problem and so when she sees my student, she sees them as criminals and not as humans and so you have that resistance from the Police Department all the time...we ask them to not come in uniform when we do home visits because we're not there to police them. Yes we work with the Police Department but my job is not to be a Police Officer. My job is to be their Case Manager and to mentor them and to get to know the families and help the student the best way possible but the Police don't see that and so they

> were resistant to not being in uniform because they're like "we don't know what we can expect. What if there's gang member? What if there's this" which I understand the Police have to do their job but this is a home meeting. Its like to me, its like somebody's welcoming me into their home. I'm not going to think of them doing anything bad to me, but these police already have a wall that you know these students are a certain way so their families must be that way too. So I get a lot of resistance...

In addition to Jamie demonstrating critical consciousness on the negative effects a police officer has on communities of color, she is also able to identify with the community she is serving, which highlights the importance of having People of Color who are critically conscious to make a difference and break away from disciplinary fear that is often transmitted into these neighborhoods. Jamie's point on how to enter someone's home in peace and without a uniform can be recognized as an empowering move toward changing policies within her job site.

For Laura, the course had such a huge impact in her life just in the 1 year, that she wanted her brother to gain those same tools at his institution as he was also struggling as the only SOC in Atlanta, so when she found out about his experience she was shocked that there were no programs being offered for SOC and that is when she realized her experience in the DSP was unique; she shares her brother's experience in college:

> ...it's a private school and it's very expensive and he only went because he got a full ride there. But they have no programs on how to deal with that, right. And so I let him borrow my books, I told him all about White privilege, and microagressions and deficit mindset, and you know all of that, and he was like, so impressed. He read this the summer before going there, before moving out, and you know- he said he used it all his freshman year. And he could identify and just pick up on things, what they were and it helped him get through and survive. And I was like, "Your school doesn't have anything like this?" (laughs). You know, to help you deal with that? And he's like, "Nope, they don't have anything, they had Spanish classes?!" And he was a double major in finance and accounting, and he tried to triple major in Spanish, but the school doesn't allow him to triple major, so…

I end with Ana's interview as it provides a closing argument on how the ethnic studies

course under the Diversity Scholars Program had an impact on all 10 students who participated within any of the cohort years. The richness of the program nurtured and empowered the academic success of all the SOC in this study plus more outside of the institution.

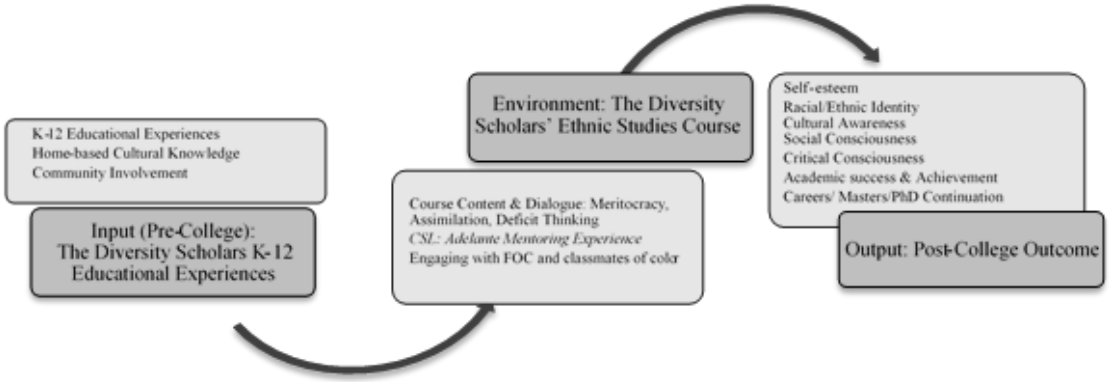

Figure 1. The Diversity Scholar Framework

CHAPTER 5

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognizing this study only explores one particular program, within one institution for a particular group of students without doing a comparison with another group can be an implication. However, the purpose of this study was never to do a comparative study but rather to offer an example of an asset-based approach that has demonstrated improvements on the academic success, retention, graduation, community engagement, and achievement of Students of Color at this particular PWI. Recognizing the inclusivity of this program can further lead to the question of whether or not the DS had already entered with a critical consciousness, for example, and the course only nurtured it. It is important to note that the findings compared their K-12 experiences to their college experiences up until where they were 5 to 7 years after the program. Findings demonstrated that all students continued to work in nonprofits or engaged in working with communities of color and or chose to live or continue surrounding their environment and/or other activities with People of Color as a result of this exposure in the DSP. In choosing to stay involved or live in areas surrounded by mostly People of Color, the DS alumni expressed that it allowed them to give back, become mentors, and/or models for other Students of Color.

Additionally, more recently there is more of a need for programs such as the DSP

as this year's 2016 presidential election has caused fear in the eyes of many Students of Color. The election has caused numerous discrimination incidents and the need to hold critically loaded discussions within academic spaces that provide a historical racial/ethnic context and the language to navigate the hostile campuses is desperately needed for Students of Color. At the end of my interview questions, I asked the DS alumni how they felt about opening the course to White students, and all 10 students answered no. They were concerned that it would change their willingness to participate in the classroom and would not share as much as they did in a room full of Students of Color. One student brought her concern of how it was already hard enough for her experience as a Student of Color to be questioned by another Student of Color and that allowing White students in this DSP would take away its uniqueness and make it like any other course that questions her experiences. While the possibilities of having unique programs such as this one is rare and difficult, the hope here is that this program inspires others to take on similar approaches in creating these learning communities not only within ethnic studies courses but also other offices, departments, colleges, and institutions as a successful retention, diversity, and educational policy.

Furthermore, the lenses provided through this study carve a space in academia to understand the limited and mediocre education to which Students of Color have been historically subjected, and which has caused generations of educational injustices (Astin, 2012; Karen & Dougherty, 2005). Using these lenses underlines the various conditions, such as citizenship, language, phenotype, culture, identity, sexuality and gender, among other multiple centers of differences, that can only be acknowledged as *intersectionalities* (Hernandez–Truyol, 1997; Johnson, 1997; Montoya, 1994; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal,

2001) that each Student of Color brings to college. The findings in this study can be further used to explore retention models, as many DS alumni shared how the DSP provided the tools for them to navigate their remaining college years with a positive impact on the university and further led them to want to give back to their university. This study further implicates that we not only need this program but more programs like this one where we not only have faculty of color, intensive introductory courses that focus on race and racism, and cohorts of Students of Color together, all needed to address the leaks within the educational pipeline.

Using a CRT/LatCrit lens allowed me, the "researcher"/colonizer, to interrelate and highlight how there exists a translucent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized (Villenas, 1996). At the same time, I acknowledge there is no such thing as a monolithic "Chicanx/Latinx experience" (Anzaldúa, 2007); therefore, it becomes critically important to include the multiple layers and epistemologies we, as Students of Color, carry as a way to inform the complexities we experience in our daily lives (Delgado Bernal et al., 2006).

Therefore part of the recommendation is to take a CRT/LatCrit lens as it allows for the interrogation of current methodological praxis to understand and bring forward the voices of those that have been historically oppressed (Anzaldúa, 1987). It provides context by paying close attention to past discrimination of Students of Color and how they have been historically targeted within the courts and institutions and connects that with present day effects (Parker, 2003).

For Chicanx/Latinx students, there is no doubt they hold multiple truths, realities and concerns that have been ignored and/or are not accounted for race, culture, and

language (Parker & Lynn, 2002). Furthermore, CRT/LatCrit lenses draw from and encourage the use of storytelling and narratives (Delgado, 1989; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Yosso, 2006) of racially marginalized students to speak back about their experiences in predominantly White campuses (Parker, 1998). The role of a colonize(r) doing research within the colonized (our Chicanx/Latinx communities) is similar to the role of a critical researcher/indigenous person who identifies as a "partial insider with background ties to the cultures being studied" (Sherif, 2001, p. 438).

Additionally, there is limited research that has truly embodied a Critical Race Theory/LatCrit with a Chicana feminist pedagogy (see: Delgado Bernal, Alemán & Garavito, 2009) to complement and redefine the 1st-year experience for Chicanx/Latinx university students and provide a space to speak on their success through resiliency (Lopez & Parker, 2003) in serving their communities while attending predominantly White institutions (PWI). Correspondingly, this study recommends bringing in a Chicana feminist lens to respond to such a deficiency by utilizing their lenses to shape the 1st-year experience. A Chicana feminist theoretical perspective takes tools from CRT/LatCrit as a way to further support the growth of critical consciousness among Students of Color while also helping to inform the experiences of Chicanx/Latinx students at predominantly White institutions of higher education.

However, in order to do this, higher education practitioners need to understand the importance of dismantling deficit approaches such as the myth of meritocracy as early as Pre-K for Students of Color to have both feet on the ground in terms of knowing who they are racially/ethnically and culturally as such understanding builds self-esteem and further leads to affirmation that regardless of all historical odds placed against them there

is still hope when one is determined. Andrade–Duncan (2009) extends what it means to have hope by noting that Chicanx/Latinx students as family continue to cling to a type of *critical hope* that allows them to strive toward action without assurance that educational structures will indeed change.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Overall, through their participation in the DSP, the Chicanx/Latinx students were able to come to an understanding that within their experiences they were not alone. There were many other Students of Color who shared the same experiences of isolation or struggles to feel accepted even while attempting to assimilate to the dominant culture. Within this understanding came contradictions that can only further explain the messiness Students of Color, particularly Chicanx/Latinx students, face in attempting to incorporate the multiple intersectionalities that define who they are today and how such impact is partly as a result of their participation in the DSP. How the Chicanx/Latinx students aimed to break out of stereotypes varied as some focused on entering fields where they were the only Student of Color while other Chicanx/Latinx students placed their focus on actively voicing and taking on roles to raise awareness on injustices occurring within communities of color whether it was through health, marketing, or education.

In some cases, some students went from entering freshman year declaring a science major to later changing their major and/or minor to ethnic studies. Other Chicanx/Latinx students went from sharing their feelings of shame in their K-12 experience for being part of a racial/ethnic culture that was looked down upon for their "lack of wanting to further their education," to feeling pride. Additionally, some Chicanx/Latinx students shared the

perceptions other Students of Color had of them "wanting to be White" as a result of their educational ambitions or passion for higher education.

Furthermore, due to the limited recording of the focus group I was only able to include a few discussions within the focus group where the Chicanx/Latinx participants speak on their current perception and understanding of society in correlation to the work, school, or career they are currently partaking in.

For me as a doctoral student, when someone in my community asks me how many years of schooling I have had, I respond 25 years in disbelief for how long I have been in school. Those asking also give me a stare of disbelief for I have given most, if not all, my life to education; yet if you ask me if I think college was for me, I still say no, but I found that self-determination. Once I became aware that I was one of the few to "make it" then I found the self- affirmation by being challenged to think critically about my racialized experiences and this further provided the self-determining drive to survive and encourage others to do the same.

I hope to one day focus not on asking Students of Color the question of whether college is for them but rather question what it is they want to study in college. In other words, go beyond college to where Students of Color do not think about college as an option after high school but rather see the various majors as the *only* option after high school. The hope is that both the students and institutions become aware of the continued problems that are currently facing youth of color and how it will continue affecting future generations, if we do not choose to act instead of react since each one of us plays a major role in improving the social conditions for all students.

In closing, this study was intended to offer a working change, as Astin (2012)

states that the decision to change something (e.g., policies, program, services, etc.) implies there is a new environment (such as new student demographics or the potential to enhance impact) and therefore some adjustments or changes may be needed to produce a better outcome. In this case the study found that the DSP produced societal change beyond college.

This study aims to inform higher education practitioners about the need to implement race-based curriculum along with a Critical Service Learning engagement with a social justice agenda focused on preparing all students to challenge existing White structures and privileges within education to bring awareness, reciprocity, and become active change agents for social justice. The integration of race into ethnic studies and Critical Service Learning employs a methodological rigor that takes the approach of understanding the racialized educational injustices that continue to persist among Students of Color as a way to advance social justice in a time of radical inequality.

Where Are the Diversity Scholars Now?

Since I last interviewed the students, almost a year ago, weddings, baccalaureate and master's graduations, starting and/or finishing graduate programs, new careers, two 1st-time mommies, and moves in and out of state, have come for the Diversity Scholars. I was able to contact a few within the time frame. As for Eva, she graduated in Spring 2015 at IMU and worked for a year working at *Communidades Unidas,* a nonprofit organization through AmeriCorps. In February of 2016, Eva and her partner found out they were expecting so she felt the need to leave her nonprofit for a job that would pay her more and had better maternity leave benefits. Eva was hired at a personal injury

company as a patient coordinator and adds, “I love it because most of our clients are Latinos, I also work with all Latinos and even the CEO of the company is a Latino!” She is currently on maternity leave caring for her beautiful daughter, Eva Luna, while her partner is attending the local community college while working for the city. Eva plans on going back for her master’s when her daughter starts preschool so that she and her partner are not in school at the same time. Her main focus now is to be a mother to her newborn.

Since I last interviewed Jamie, she was inspired to leave her job as a Youth Case Manager, and apply to a master’s program. Jamie concluded her position this summer 2016 and started her master’s program in social work at the University of Southern California as a full-time student while interning part-time as a school social worker. Jamie wants to become a social worker who helps at-risk youth, or wants to work directly with the juvenile justice system as she saw the need in her previous job. As Jamie states, “the system doesn’t address mental health issues and trauma that happens to these youth and their families.” Having recently been married and many of her attendees also former DS alumni, Jamie and her partner are holding off on kids as they are overwhelmed with work and her commute from San Diego to USC takes up most of her time.

For Eduardo, he recently graduated in 2016 from Northwestern Law with a Juris Doctor and has since moved from Chicago to Seattle. In August 2016, he started a position as an associate at a law firm, which has kept him distracted from the thought of marriage and kids.

Adriana is currently finishing up her Master’s of Science in Mining Engineering. She recently relocated to Tucson, Arizona with her partner, where she is working as a consultant for an engineering firm. She has two “fur babies” (Bubbah & Reube) and no

human babies.

Since the interview with Rafael, he finished and received his Masters in Education in Educational Leadership and Policy at IMU in Utah. He is currently in the process of publishing an essay on pathways to higher education for undocumented students in Utah. Rafael is also working for a college access scholarship program at the local community college and also adopted a cat this year.

APPENDIX A

DIVERSITY SCHOLARS' NINE MAJOR SPONSORSHIP REQUIREMENTS

A Diversity Scholar has nine major sponsorship requirements, which include:

1) *an assigned Academic Advisor and Peer Mentor;*
2) *must participate in monthly one–on–one advising to ensure success and progress;*
3) *must meet with their assigned Peer mentor; 4) must attend/participate in the Student Equity and Diversity overnight orientation (there is a $45.00 fee, fee waivers are available for those with financial need);*
4) *must be enrolled and participate a three class block schedule associated with the program fall semester and one class in the Spring semester;*
5) *must participate in a year–long Critical Service Learning experience associated with the program;*
6) *must meet regularly with faculty associated with the program;*
7) *will be required to attend at least three hours of study hall a week during the academic year;* and lastly,
8) *will be required to attend at least three summer learning enhancement workshops prior to fall semester* (OED website).

APPENDIX B

INTRO TO ETHNIC STUDIES SYLLABUS

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

INTRODUCTION TO ETHNIC STUDIES: EDUCATIONAL EQUITY FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR
ETHNIC STUDIES 2500 WITH A SERVICE LEARNING DESIGNATION
FALL 2010—TUESDAY & THURSDAY 12:25-1:45

Dr. Wanda Pillow	Dr. Sonya M. Aléman	Dr. Dolores Delgado Bernal	Dr. Kim Hackford-Peer
wanda.pillow@utah.edu			
sonya.aleman@utah.edu			
dolores.delgadobernal@utah.edu			
kim.hackford-peer@utah.edu			
Office: MBH 382	**Office: LNCO 2523**	**Office: MBH 381**	**Office: Bldg 44, Rm 217**
Hrs: by appt	**Hrs: Thurs 10-1 & by appt.**	**Hrs: Tues 2-3 and by appt**	**Hrs: By appt.**
Classroom: ST 208	**Classroom: ST 205**	**Classroom: OSH 106**	**Classroom: WBB 207**

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Belinda Saltiban, ***saltiban_ohana@yahoo.com***

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

In this course, we will draw from poetry, short stories, narratives, critical essays as well as empirical research to examine the social, political, economic, and historical context of schooling for students of color in U.S. K-12 and higher educational systems. Students will be introduced to a set of concepts and theories from which to better understand the educational experiences and realities of historically underrepresented students. The course will also challenge students to be more reflective about their educational experiences and the schooling conditions of students of color in general, and to apply the concepts introduced in class in an analysis of their own educational and service learning experiences. More specifically, the course is intended to enable students to:

1. **Develop an understanding of the histories, concepts, perspectives, and theories for examining the complex realities of historically underrepresented students;**

2. **Articulate their understanding of concepts such as meritocracy, microagressions, social justice, resistance, agency, and activism, and to apply these concepts to their personal educational experiences and to the on-going public debate over educational (under)achievement, equity, and the politics of education;**

3. **Engage in inter-ethnic/racial dialogues about race and racism, the use of power and privilege to institutionalize inequity, methods for achieving social and educational change, and the practice of leadership and activism in educational and community settings; and**

4. **Make connections between theory and practice by engaging in a service learning experience that draws upon the experiences and identities of students of color and allows students to explore and reflect on their own identities along with those of others.**

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This is a very demanding course, both in regard to time and academic rigor. The course consists of short lectures, assigned readings, films, guest speakers, and intensive group discussion about topics, issues, and concepts that are often very difficult to address (i.e., racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, power, and privilege). We will integrate a pedagogical approach that is based on a collaborative, constructivist teaching/learning process and offers

a seminar-like learning experience for a community of learners. This collaborative pedagogical approach assumes that every member can and will contribute in multiple ways by bringing her/his lived experience(s) and expertise into the teaching/learning process. You will earn points towards you final grade in 8 different ways:

1. ***Class Participation*:** Much of what we do in this class requires us to analyze the material we read and discuss. To do this, you will need to attend class, be prepared to participate in each session, and complete all assignments on time. Class participation includes attendance and punctuality, actively listening, reading of all required articles and chapters, and thoughtfully contributing to the class dialogue, activities, and group work. The syllabus identifies readings that should be completed *PRIOR* to the class meeting for which they are assigned. You will be asked to complete in-class assignments throughout the semester, but they will not be announced ahead of time. It is important to be in class when these exercises are assigned, as they *CANNOT* be made up. The assignments for our class will receive 5 or 10 points per activity. There are 50 points possible.

2. ***WebCT Assignments:*** One of the ways we will help guide your understanding of the material we read is to ask you to respond to some of the readings throughout the semester through our WebCT page. At three different times during the semester, you will need to respond to a prompt related to readings for a particular theme or concept we are discussing. This assignment will help you focus your reading and will help us to know what areas to clarify for you. To complete these assignments, you will need to be in class, complete your readings, and be able to navigate WebCT. You will be required to post/upload your assignment before 8am the day your assignment is due. There are 40 points possible.

3. ***Service Learning Reflection Writing Assignments:*** At two points in the semester, you will be asked to compose a 2-page single spaced essay to be uploaded on WebCT that allows you to reflect on your service learning experience. You will be given a prompt to respond to and will need to draw from the course readings and/or concepts we are discussing in class to analyze and explain your service learning experience. The assignments need to be in 12-point font, single-spaced, with 1-inch margins. You will upload your paper by 8am the day it is due. These assignments will help you develop your writing, organizational, and interpretive skills. A total of 50 points (25 pts each assignment) are possible.

4. ***Advisor Participation*:** You need to meet at least once with your assigned advisor before fall break. At this time, they will provide you information related to individual student advising and/or on issues related to course registration, financial aid, writing support, and library use. You and your advisor need to complete the Advisor Participation Form and you both must sign it. The signed form is due on Thursday October 7th and is worth 10 points.

5. ***Service Learning*:** This course has a 3-unit service learning designation which means you will participate in a service learning experience one hour per week for 11 weeks during the semester at one of two service learning sites. You will complete your service learning at the same site and on the same day and time throughout the fall semester. You will be participating as a mentor for Adelante: A College Awareness and Preparatory Partnership or as a mentor for Calvary Academy of Excellence Saturday School.

Adelante is a partnership that provides opportunities for underrepresented elementary school students to experience the U. The goal is to bring diverse students from Jackson Elementary School to the university where they participate in hands-on activities, and to also bring the

university to them. Over the last five years we've had over 230 undergraduate and graduate students volunteer as mentors at the school--reading to students, helping them with class projects, and/or other class related activities.

Calvary Academy of Excellence is a cultural literacy project focusing on culture, heritage, awareness and identity. The Saturday School supplements mainstream schools utilizing African-centered curricula to foster a positive African American self-esteem in a shared learning and teaching partnership. Mentors will work with community experts and educators to provide all children with a positive learning experience that focuses on the educational, social, cultural, and historical contributions of the African-American community.

Attached at the end of the syllabus are your Service Learning Time Log forms. More detailed information about service learning and the Time Log forms will be explained at the service learning orientation the third week of class. There are 100 points possible.

6. ***Midterm Exam*:** The midterm exam consists of multiple choice and true/false questions. The exam will provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your knowledge of the concepts from the 1st seven weeks of class. The exam will be given in class the Tuesday after fall break, October 19th. You must be in class to take the exam. Late or early exams will not be given. There are 100 points possible.

7. *Personalized Educational Narrative:* All students are required to complete a personalized educational narrative that incorporates personal experiences and research. Students are asked to incorporate ideas and concepts from the assigned readings to contextualize their educational experiences. We are likely to make critical decisions and assertions about difficult issues in education without questioning ourselves and asking difficult questions such as: What are the principles that inform my views on educational opportunity as it relates to race, class, gender, citizenship status, language, etc.? What in my own background and history helped me arrive at these principles? What would I still like to learn about education? Writing this paper is meant to help you ask these difficult questions and to engage you on a personal, political, and intellectual level. Portions of the final paper might also be used for a personal statement in a future scholarship application.

The final paper should be 7-9 pages and is written in two stages during this course. You will turn in a hard copy to class AND upload a version to WebCT. The first draft is a personal memoir and should be about 4 pages in length (double-spaced with one-inch margins). The first draft is due **Tuesday November 2nd** and is worth 50pts. The second draft incorporates an analysis of your personal memoir by using the ideas and concepts from the readings and class discussions to better understand and explain your educational journey thus far. The second draft should be 7-9 pages in length and two copies of it are due **Thursday December 2nd** for the writer's workshop held in class on this day. Five class participation points will be awarded for attending the writers' workshop AND if you do not attend the writers workshops 5 points will automatically be taken off your final paper grade. The final paper should be written in APA style, include a reference list, and is due **Thursday December 9th.** The final paper should include a minimum of 8 references from the syllabus or other related publications and is worth 100 points.

GRADING

Weight of Assignments:	**Grading Scale Based on Percentage of Total Points:**	
	93-100	**A**
	90-92	**A-**

Advisor Participation Form	**10pts**	**87-89**	**B+**
Class Participation (5pts/10 pts each)	**50pts**	**83-86**	**B**
Three Web CT Assignments	**40 pts**	**80-82**	**B-**
Two Service Learning Reflections (25 each)	**50 pts**	**77-79**	**C+**
Service Learning (11 hours)	**100pts**	**73-76**	**C**
Mid-Term Exam	**100pts**	**70-72**	**C-**
Final Paper (First Draft)	**50pts**	**67-69**	**D+**
Final Paper	**100pts**	**63-66**	**D**
Total Points Possible	**500pts**	**60-62**	**D-**
		Below 60	**F**

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance*:* **Attendance is required for success in this course. It is expected that you will be in class on time and remain in class the entire time. Much of the material in class is supplemental to the readings. So if you miss class *you* are responsible for obtaining the material and information you missed *from a classmate* as it may not be in your reading. In addition, we will have discussion and short exercises that can only be completed if you are in class. Students need to take the responsibility to come prepared for class by reading the assigned work *before class* and posing questions, criticism, and additional issues to consider.**

Academic Misconduct**: Academic honesty is expected of all students. Each student has an obligation to act with honesty and integrity, and to respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. All instances of academic misconduct will be penalized. Academic misconduct includes cheating, fabrication of information, and plagiarism. Examples of acts that constitute cheating include looking at another student's exam, allowing another student to look at your exam, giving cues to other students on answers, referencing a cheat sheet, and making arrangements to have another student take your exam. Examples of fabrication include creating data and/or quotations and inventing references. Examples of plagiarism include failing to cite any major idea created by some other person, failing to cite and/or enclose in quotation marks all words, phrases, and sentences copied from another source, or acquiring a paper from another source and submitting it as your work for academic evaluation.**

Classroom Conduct**: Much of what we will be studying in this course deals with issues of race/ethnicity, nationality, class, and gender. There are likely to be times when you disagree with the ideas and perspectives of the readings or others in the class. While such disagreement may be uncomfortable, it is in the sharing of different ideas and perspectives that we come to a better understanding of ourselves and our diverse society. In this class your ideas and your views are important, respected, and valued. As members of a shared community, even a temporary one such as this class, we all must take responsibility for creating a safe space where we can be open and honest in our discussions. It is expected that you will treat your classmates, the teaching assistants, and the professors, as you would like to be treated. For example, avoid personal insults and confrontations when you disagree with the ideas of a classmate and avoid reading the newspaper, texting, or wearing headphones in class. *Remaining respectful of others is a central requirement for this course.***

Disability Statement**: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to me and to the Center for Disability Services,** http://disability.utah.edu/ **162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (VT/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodations.**

THANK YOU FOR TURNING OFF YOUR CELL PHONES. NO TEXTING DURING CLASS!

COURSE SCHEDULE & READINGS

To save students a substantial amount of money, the required readings are being made available on WebCT (on U of U home page, click "WebCT"). Log in with your UID and password. They will also be sold as a reading packet available through U of U copy services.

READINGS SHOULD BE COMPLETED *PRIOR* TO THE CLASS FOR WHICH THEY ARE ASSIGNED.

*WEEK 1: **COURSE OVERVIEW & COLONIALISM & NATIVISM AS FOUNDATIONS OF INEQUITY:*** **We will read and discuss the idea of colonialism and nativism as they relate to communities of color in the U.S. This week will set the foundation for understanding and critiquing educational practices that marginalize large segments of society.**

8/24:
All Classes in OSH Auditorium
Introductions & Review of Syllabus
Introduce WebCT

8/26:
Trask, H-K. (1991/92). Lovely hula hands: Corporate tourism and the prostitution of Hawaiian culture. *Border/Lands,* 23*,* 22-29.
Perez Huber, Lindsay; Benavides Lopez, Corina; Malagon, Maria C.; Velez, Veronica; and Solorzano, Daniel G. (2008). Getting beyond the 'symptom,' acknowledging the 'disease': theorizing racist nativism. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 11(1) March, 39–51.
Film Clip: *Race is the Place*—Haunani-Kay Trask
Due: First WebCT Assignment
Due: Mentor Background Information Form & Service Learning Placement Form

*WEEK 2: **DEFICIT THEORIES AND THE MYTHS OF MERITOCRACY & THE "MODEL MINORITY":*** **This week's readings focus on understanding the concept of deficit thinking and the ways that deficit discourses are part of "normal" everyday language and on debunking the myths of meritocracy and the model minority.**

8/31:
Valencia, R. R. (1997). Conceptualizing the notion of deficit thinking. In R. R. Valencia, *The evolution of deficit thinking: Educational thought and practice* (pp. 1-12). Washington D.C.: The Falmer Press.
McNamee, Stephen J. and Miller, Jr., Robert K. (2004). "The American Dream: Origins and Prospects," in *The Meritocracy Myth* USA: Rowman & Littlefield, 1-12.
~~**Lemann, Nicolas (1999). "Afterward: A real meritocracy" in *The big test: The secret history of American meritocracy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 542-351.**~~

Sojourner's Truth "Ain't I a Woman" at
http://www.feminist.com/resources/artspeech/genwom/sojour.htm

Utube Clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vr_vKsk_h8

Due: Class Survey

9/2:

Minatoya, Lydia. (1992). "Transformation," Taking to High Monks in the Snow.
Chun, Ki-Taek. (1995). "The myth of Asian American success and its educational
ramifications" in *The Asian American Experience: A Source Book for Teachers and Students*, edited by Don Nakanishi & Tina Yamano Nishida Rountledge, pgs. 95-112.
Film Clips: *Race Is the Place* (Kate Rigg, "Rice, rice baby")

*WEEK 3: **PRIVILEGE, COLORBLINDNESS & CRITICAL SERVICE LEARNING ORIENTATION:*** **The concepts of privilege and colorblindness will be defined and deconstructed in order to demonstrate how they facilitate inequity and oppression. On Thursday we will define critical service learning and provide an orientation at both service learning sites.**

9/7:

McIntosh, P. (1997). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women's studies. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *Critical White studies: Looking behind the mirror* (pp. 291-299). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Wise, Tim (2003). Whites swim in racial preferences. February 18, 2003 http://www.alternet.org.
Williams, Patricia J. (1997). The Emperor's New Clothes. In Wiliams, P. J, *Seeing a color-blind future: The paradox of race* (pp. 3-15). New York: Noonday Press.
Due: Second WebCT Assignment

9/9:

Donahue, D. & Mitchell, T.D. (2010). Critical service learning as a tool for identity exploration. Association for American Colleges and Universities. *Diversity & Democracy*, 13(2),16-17.

Meet at your service learning site:
Jackson Elementary School (750 West 200 North--801-578-8165)
Calvary Baptist Church (1090 South State Street--801-355-1025)

*WEEK 4: **THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF RACE AND AN INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL RACE THEORY:*** **We will discuss how "race" has been socially constructed and provide you with a working definitions of racism. On Thursday our guest speaker will introduce Critical Race Theory and microagressions.**

9/14:

Haney Lopez, I. F. (2000). The social construction of race. In R. Delgado & J. Stefancic (Eds.), *Critical race theory: The cutting edge* (2nd ed., pp. 163-175). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Tatum, B. D. (1997). Defining racism. In B. D. Tatum, *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?": And other conversations about race*, (pp. 3-17). New York: Basic Books.

9/16:
All Classes Meet in OSH Auditorium
Guest Speaker: Dr. Larry Parker

Derald Wing Sue, Annie I. Lin, Gina C. Torino, Christina M. Capodilupo, and David P. Rivera (2009). Racial Microaggressions and Difficult Dialogues on Race in the Classroom. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology,* 15(2), 183–190.
Bell, D.A. (2000). After We're Gone: Prudent Speculations on America in a Post-Racial Epoch. In Delgado, R. & Stefancic, J. (Eds.). Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge. (Second Edition), (pp. 2-8). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

WEEK 5: ***RESISTANCE AND MARGINALITY:*** **We will look to the concepts of resistance and marginality to better understand how students of color survive, interact, engage in school, and influence the world around them. These paradigms should also be helpful for grounding your final paper.**

9/21:
hooks, b. (1990). Choosing the margin as a space of radical openness. In b. hooks, *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics* (pp. 145-153). Boston: South End Press.
~~**Cutri, R.M., Delgado Bernal, D., Powell, A., & Ramirez Wiedeman, C. (1998). An honorable sisterhood: Four diverse women identify a critical ethic of care in higher education. *Transformations, 9*(2), 101-117.**~~
Carter, Prudence L. (2005). "Black cultural capital and the conflicts of schooling in *Keeping it real: School success beyond Black and White*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 47-76.
9/23:
All Classes Meet in OSH Auditorium
Film: *Fear and Learning at Hoover Elementary* (1997), Laura Angelica Simon Tenorio, R. (1999) Race and respect among young children. *Rethinking Our Classroom, 24-28*.

WEEK 6: ***IMMIGRATION, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, AND EDUCATIONAL ACCESS*****: We will discuss both the immigration and affirmative action debates and point to how these issues impact educational access for marginalized students.**

9/28:
Plous, S. (2003). Ten myths about affirmative action. In S. Plous (Ed.), *Understanding Prejudice and Discrimination* (pp. 206-212). New York: McGraw-Hill. Located at http://www.understandingprejudice.org/readroom/articles/affirm.htm
Charles, Camille Z., Fischer, Mary J., Mooney, Margarita A., Massey, Douglas S. (2009). Affirmative-Action Programs for Minority Students: Right in Theory, Wrong in Practice. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(29), 3/27/2009.
Larew, John. (2000). Why are droves of unqualified, unprepared kids getting into our top colleges? Because their dads are alumni. In Adams, M, et al, *Readings for diversity and social justice* (pp. 418-421). New York & London: Routledge.
9/30*:*

Salt Lake Tribune Articles (April 10, 2006-January 31, 2007). Ten articles by various reporters (pp. 1-10).

The S.I.N. Collective (2007). Students Informing Now (S.I.N.) challenge the racial state in California without shame . . . *SIN Vergüenza! Educational Foundations*, Winter-Spring, 71-90.

Mock Legislative Activity: In-state tuition & Affirmative action

WEEK 7: ***SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS & INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER, RACE, & SEXUALITY*****: We will follow up on and challenge binary thinking and biological determinism and be introduced to a brief history of feminist theory's specific intervention to these constructions. We will challenge our own gendered thinking and consider questions of "What does feminism look like now in the 21st century and where is it going?"**

10/5:

Rampton, Martha (2008). "The Three Waves of Feminism." ***Pacific,*** **41(2).**

Peterson, Latoya. (2008). "The "or" versus the "and"--Women of Color and Mainstream Feminism."
http://www.racialicious.com/2008/04/28/the-or-versus-the-and-women-of-color-and-mainstream-feminism/

Walker, Alice. (1983). Definition of a "Womanist." *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*., xi-xii. Orlando. FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Anzaldúa, Gloria E. (2003). "La Conciencia de la Mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness", pp. 179-187 in "Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives." Eds. Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim. Routledge: New York. (quotes from p. 182).

Barnstein, Kate (1998). ***My Gender Notebook*****. New York: Routledge. 25-33.**

LOOK at the following Websites—HAVE FUN—and specifically think about: What does "feminism" look like now? What is feminist work? Where is feminist work occurring?

www.chicanas.com

http://www.wewin04.org/

http://www.thirdwavefoundation.org/ (look at "our history" and "about us" links)

http://plainsfeminist.blogspot.com/2008/04/prof-black-womans-meme-why-womens.html

http://lrwebb.wordpress.com/ **(Diary of a Black Male Feminist; click on any link or subject)**

http://queerswithoutborders.com/wpmu/ **(check out "statement of purpose" or "history")**

http://blog.angryasianman.com/2009/07/music-video-heres-to-you-by-good-asian.html

10/7:

Discuss and reflect on your critical service learning

Exam Study Session

Due: First Service Learning Reflection
Due: Advisor Participation Form
Due: First Service Learning Time Log

WEEK 8: ***FALL BREAK –NO READINGS***

WEEK 9: ***LISTENING TO THE EDUCATIONAL STORY OF OTHERS*****: The midterm exam will be given on Tuesday. On Thursday we will begin readings and a discussion related to writing your personal educational narrative.**

10/19:

In-Class Midterm Exam

10/21:

Alexie, S. (2007). Chapter 4, Because geometry is not a country somewhere near France. In *Absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian*. pp. 24-31.
Alexie, S. (2007). Chapter 5, Hope against hope. In *Absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian*. pp. 32-43.
Alexie, S. (2007). Chapter 6, Go Means Go. In *Absolutely true diary of a part-time Indian*. pp. 44-47.
Film Clip: *Smoke Signals*

WEEK 10: ***MORE PERSONAL NARRATIVES & EDUCATIONAL STORIES:*** **We will continue to explore the lives of "others" via different forms of personal narratives.**

10/26: Review Midterm
Serros, Michele. "Introduction," "Annie Says." *Chicana Falsa and other stories of death, identity and Oxnard* (1993) (pg xi-xii, 4-5).
Meiner, Joshua Clark (2000). Memoirs of a gay fraternity brother. In Adams, M, et al, *Readings for diversity and social justice* (pp. 299-301). New York & London: Routledge.
Kelly, Kathleen (2000). Working class students speak out. In Adams, M, et al, *Readings for diversity and social justice* (pp. 424-425). New York & London: Routledge.
~~Due: Third WebCT Assignment~~
10/28:
All Classes meet in OSH Auditorium

Guest Speakers: Student Panel of CESA student of color group members
Villalpando, O. (2003). Self-segregation or self-preservation? A critical race theory and Latina/o critical theory analysis of a study of Chicana/o college students. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *16*(5), 619-646.

WEEK 11: ***REPRESENTATION, STUDENT ACTIVISTS, AND THE MEDIA:*** **We will talk about the way the media often represents students of color and listen to how local students of color are altering these representations and utilizing the media as a form of activism in order to improve their communities. On Thursday we will read how students of color nationally are utilizing the media as a form in activism in order to improve their educational experiences and the lives of the members of their communities.**

11/2:
All Classes Meet in OSH Auditorium

Video Clip: *Latina/os in Schools According to Hollywood*
Guest Speakers: ***Venceremos*** **student panel**

Due: Personal Educational Narrative
11/4:

Akom , A.A.; Cammarota, Julio and Ginwright, Shawn. (August 2008) Youthtopias: Towards a New Paradigm of Critical Youth Studies, *Youth Media Reporter*, 4, 109-125.
Youth Media Council (May 2005). Looking deeper: A report on the visibility and invisibility of youth, policy, and race in San Jose Mercury News (pp. 1-6). San Francisco: Youth Media Council.
Due: Pairs for Digital Service Learning Reflection

WEEK 12: ***FEMINIST NARRATIVES, DIGITAL TESTIMONIOS, AND YOUR WRITING*****: We will return and discuss your personal narratives. We will discuss two more narratives written by women of color and watch examples of digital testimonios. Thursday's class will be conducted by the Writing Center.**

11/9:

~~*All Classes meet in OSH Auditorium*~~ Meet in your regular classrooms
Review & Return Your Personal Educational Narrative

Muaddi Darraj, Susan. (2002) "It's Not an Oxymoron: The Search for an Arab Feminism." Colonize This!
Moraga, C. (1983) La Guera. In C. Moraga and G. Anzaldúa, (Eds.), This bridge called my back: Writings by radical women of color (pp. 27-34). New York: Kitchen Table Press.
Lee, JeeYuen (2001). Beyond Bean Counting in *Listen up: Voices from the next feminist generation*, Edited by Barbara Findlen. Seattle: Seal Press. 67-73.
11/11:
Writing Workshop: Identifying Readings and Concepts for Your Narrative

Delgado Bernal, D., Alemán, E. Jr., & Garavito, A. (2009) Latina/o Undergraduate Students Mentoring Latina/o Elementary Students: A Borderlands Analysis of Shifting Identities and 1st-Year Experiences. *Harvard Educational Review*.

WEEK 13: ***COMMUNITY & FAMILIAL ASSETS*****: We will discuss ways to include the stories and assets of our communities and families as partners for change.**

11/16:

All Classes meet in OSH Auditorium

Guest Speaker: 'Anapesi Ka'ili, Feleti Matagi, and Belinda Saltiban

Ka'ili, Tëvita O. (2005). Tauhi vä: Nurturing Tongan sociospatial ties in Maui and beyond. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 17 (1), 83–101. (You are only required to read these pages.)

hooks, bell (2003). "Progressive Learning-A Family Value" in *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope.* New York & London: Routledge. 117-126.

Arviso-Alvord, Lori. (1997) "Full Circle" in *First Person, First People: Native American college graduates tell their life stories*. Edited by Andrew Garrod and Collen Larimore. (pp. 112-119). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

11/18:

Meet with the Writing Center Staff in your regular classroom: thesis, clarity, detail / specifics. Feedback for student examples
Writing Workshop: Identifying Readings and Concepts for Your Narrative
Due: Second Service Learning Time Log Due in Class
11/19
Due: Digital service learning reflection

*WEEK 14: **CRITICAL SERVICE LEARNING AND THINKING ABOUT YOUR IDENTITIES*: We will discuss research focusing on a small group of CESA Scholars who served as mentors and participated in this course three years ago, and we will reflect on your experiences as a CESA Scholar this semester. No class on Thursday.**

11/23:
Share digital stories
Due: In class activity
11/25:
No Class: Thanksgiving Break

*WEEK 15: **AGENCY, ACTIVIST, & COALITION BUILDING*: On Thursday we will conduct a writer's workshop in an effort to assist students with their final papers.**

11/30:
Visit http://www.whatsrace.org/ and click on link "Toolbox." Visit "Glossary," "Key readings," and "Side trips on road to diversity." Read all the terms in the "Glossary." Visit the "Key readings" page. Read the following four readings: "Affirmative action FAQ," "The wealth factor," "Asian Americans aren't White folks 'racial mascots." Read "Side trips on the road to diversity."
Film: *What's race got to do with it? Social disparities and student success*.

12/2:
Writing Workshop: Peer Editing

Due: 2 Copies of a Draft of Your Final Paper
Participation points will be given for students who are present with their assignment. Points will be taken off the final paper for those who are not present.

*WEEK 16: **COALITION BUILDING & INTERRACIAL DIALOGUES*: We will discuss the tensions that exist among and between ethnic and racial communities. We will begin to discuss the ways that students and leaders can deconstruct the tensions and challenge ourselves to strategize across and between communities. The final paper will be due on the last day of class.**

12/7:
All Classes meet in OSH Auditorium
Matsuda, M. (1993). We will not be used. *Asian American Pacific Islands Law Journal*. San Francisco: Regents of the University of California.
Weiner-Mahfuz, Lisa. (2002)"Organizing 101: A Mixed-Race Feminist in

Movements for Social Justice." <u>Colonize This!</u>
Zuniga, Ximena; Sevig, Todd D. (2000). Bridging the "us/them" divide: intergroup dialogue and peer leadership. In Adams, M, et al, *Readings for diversity and social justice* (pp. 488-493). New York & London: Routledge.
Film Clip: *Race Is the Place* (Danny Hoch, Beau Sia, Mayda del Valle, Ahmed Ahmed)

12/9:

All Classes meet in OSH Auditorium
Due: Final Paper
Due: Third and Final Service Learning Log
Pizza Party!

APPENDIX C

THE ETHNIC STUDIES COURSE

The Ethnic Studies Course

Overall, the course has four major aims to enable Students of Color to:

1. Develop an understanding of the histories, concepts, perspectives, and theories for examining the complex realities of historically underrepresented students;

2. Articulate their understanding of concepts such as meritocracy, microagressions, social justice, resistance, agency, and activism, and to apply these concepts to their personal educational experiences and to the ongoing public debate over educational (under)achievement, equity, and the politics of education;

3. Engage in inter–ethnic/racial dialogues about race and racism, the use of power and privilege to institutionalize educational and community settings; and

4. Make connections between theory and practice by engaging in a Critical Service Learning experience that draws upon the experiences and identities of Students of Color and allows students to explore and reflect on their own identities along with those of others.

APPENDIX D

CRITICAL SERVICE LEARNING SITES

Critical Service Learning Sites

1. The Calvary of Excellence partnership is considered a cultural literacy project invested on culture, heritage, awareness and identity. The program is offered as a Saturday School to nearby schools utilizing African–centered curricula as a way to cultivate a positive self–esteem for today's African American youth in a teaching and learning environment. The mentors work closely with the community to foster such environment with specific focus on educational, social, cultural, and historical contributions of the African–American community (OED website).

2. The Adelante Partnership at Bryant Middle School focuses on building relationships with the students through tutoring as a way to increase their awareness and expectations to attend college. There are four activities the mentors can take on with the students they are as followed: Math Help (an afterschool program) for students struggling with math; MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) a program intended to support underserved youth struggling with these subjects; AVID (Advanced Via Individual Determination) is a program focused on preparing 8th graders for college and math courses (math labs to algebra classes).

3. Mestizo Arts and Activism (MAA) is a community organization led by youth. The focus of the organization is to promote social justice by making their voice count through research and personal experiences on social issues such as immigration, anti–bullying, child abuse, systemic racism in education, and art and empowerment. Mentors serving in this organization take on facilitation responsibilities in group discussions and help the youth transition into their own projects while also serving as resources to support youth's research interest and awareness on college access (OED website).

APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Student Interview Protocol

Critical Race Theory Course
Individual Student Interview Protocol

Participant: _____

Date: _____

Interview #: _____

Introduction: The hope of this study is to gain an understanding of how you are learning. As a student who participated in the _____ Introduction to Ethnic Studies course, your perspectives are instrumental. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose to not answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, you perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Ask participants to read and sign consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

1. **Educational Aspirations and Educational Experiences**
   a. Are you in school? If so, what year?
   b. What is or was your major?
   c. Did this class fit in with your academic plan? Why did you have to take this course? Had you heard any comments about the course before? Did you know that there was a Critical Service Learning component to this course?
   d. Prior to volunteering with *Adelante,* did you volunteer or work in an elementary school setting before?
   e. Since the course, did you take any similar courses? Did you take other courses with a Critical Service Learning component?
   f. Do you think it is important to give a part of your time to your community? Why or why not?
   g. If you can paint a picture of your past educational experience, how to they compare with you present educational experience?
   h. Can you describe your pathway to college? What factors impacted your decision to go to college?
   Probes: Were there people/programs that aspired and/or impacted you to go to college? If so, who?
2. **Educational Benefits**
   a. How do you feel about your participation in the course?
   b. What did you like the most about this course?
   c. What do you feel you learned in this course?
   d. What did you think about the readings for this course? Did

you find them easy, average or difficult?
e. How, if at all, did the course contribute to your success at the University of Utah?

3. **Developmental Benefits**
a. How if at all, did the course readings impact your racial/ethnic identity?
b. What other courses did you have with faculty of color?
c. Do you think your sense of identity has influenced your persistence in college? If so, how?
d. In what ways, did the course contribute to your overall college experience during you 1st year?
e. While I know its been a while since the course, can you describe any connections you saw between the academic material that you learned in the class, and how if so, did they help you make sense of your mentoring experience with *Adelante?*
Probes: Did you find yourself often drawing on the site to help you understand the readings (scribble on the side of the readings)? How? Did you feel as though the course allowed you to reflect on your site experience with the course? Do you feel the reflection assignments helped you reflect? How? Do you feel your reflections change the way you performed you service? Do you feel your written reflection assignments enhanced the classroom learning?

4. **Attitudinal Benefits**
a. What kinds of relationships did you former as an *Adelante mentor*? How do you think your racial/ethnic identity impacted the way the *Adelante* students thought about college?
Probes: What grade(s) you worked with and what did you do as a mentor in the program.
b. Do you feel part of the university community? If so, what has made you feel a part of the university? If not, why od you not feel a part of the university?
c. Describe any kind of impact that this course had on you, personally and academically.
d. In what ways did the course contribute to your sense of belonging/not belonging specifically to the university community?
e. How did this class compare to your other classes? Were they straight lecture? Did you feel there was more student participation in this course? Do you feel this course required more work?
f. How did you do in this course? What kinds of feedback did you receive from the instructors/T.A.s?

5. **Postcollege Benefits**
a. Did your Critical Service Learning experience influence

your community involvement or educational goals, if so how? Probes: did you change majors? Service Learning course? Service careers?

b. Do you feel the course helped you in unexpected ways, if so how?

c. Did you recently fill out a survey that was sent over email? If so, what would you have liked to be asked that was not asked?

d. Overall, how did you feel about the format of the course? Probes: Did you like being split into different sections? Did you like having a professor of color or a critical professor? What did you think about meeting up with various advisors and/or mentors of color? What would you have liked to see in the course?

Closing: What other comments do you have on any of the issues we have discussed today?

Thank participant. Ask permission to contact them for any follow-up questions if necessary at the end of the data collection process.

Student Focus Group Interview Protocol
Critical Race Theory Course
Focus Group Interview Protocol

Participants: _____

Date: _____

Focus Group #: _____

1. **Introduction:** There is a broad range of literature on the benefits of racially diverse campuses throughout colleges and universities. Yet, there is no literature that speaks to the uniqueness of the University of Utah. To further explore the experiences of undergraduate Students of Color at a predominantly White institution. I want to investigate students' thoughts on the current diversity efforts at the University of Utah.
The hope of this study is to gain an understanding of how you are learning. As students who participated in the Critical Race Theory Course: An Introduction to Ethnic Studies, your perspectives are instrumental. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you may choose to not answer any of the questions I pose today. There are no right or wrong answers. I am most interested in hearing about your experiences, you perspectives, your beliefs, and your stories. (Ask participants to read and sign consent form, review any questions regarding confidentiality, and ask permission to tape record the interview). Do you have any (other) questions before we begin?

1. **Understanding of Racial Diversity**
    a. How do you interpret racial diversity?
    b. Does it have personal value to you?
    c. What do you think about the racial diversity at this institution?
2. **Experiences and Racial Discrimination**
    a. What has your educational experience been like at the University of Utah?
    b. What kinds of challenges do you or did you face as a Student of Color at the University of Utah?
    c. Have you or did you experience or witnessed forms of bias/harassment/discrimination due to race?
3. **Feelings of being valued and belongingness**
    a. How valued do you or did you feel at thee University of Utah? Please explain.
    b. Do you or did you experience feelings of belonging at the University of Utah?
4. **School's commitment to diversity**
    a. Do you believe faculty, staff, and administrators have commitment to diversity and promote the appreciation of cultural/racial differences?
5. **Racial tensions and recommendations**

a. Do you believe there are racial tensions at the University of Utah?
b. What are your thoughts on the current diversity efforts by the University of Utah?
c. What recommendations do you have to see diversity improvements across campus?

Closing: What other comments do you have on any of the issues we have discussed today?

Thank participants. Ask permission to contact them for any follow-up questions if necessary at the end of the data collection process.

APPENDIX F

ADDITIONAL DIVERSITY SCHOLARS DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

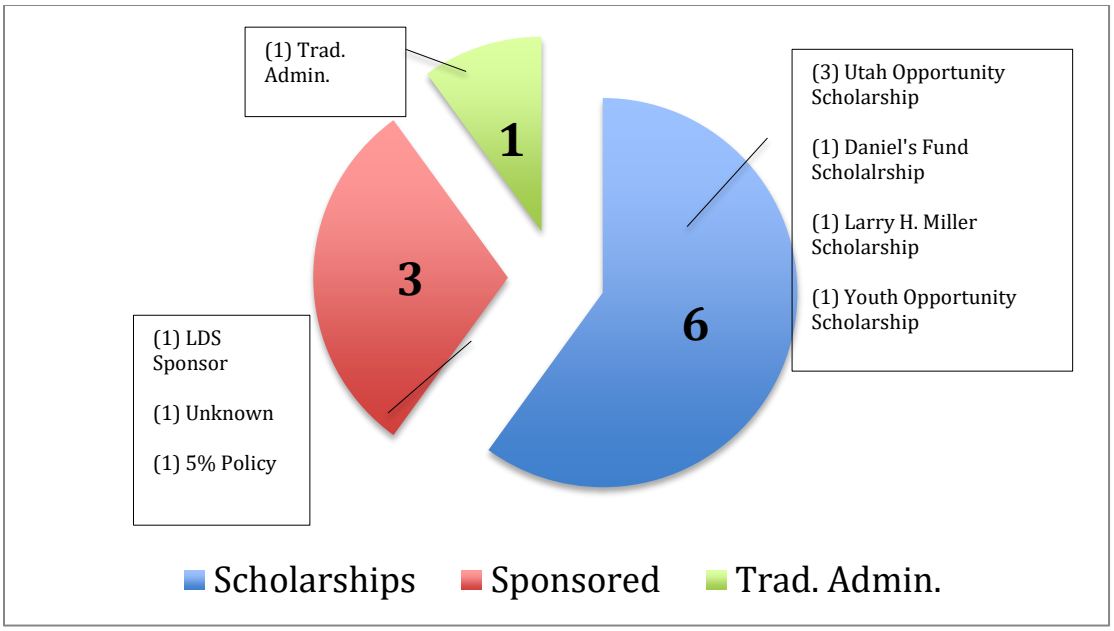

Figure 2. The Diversity Scholars Program Entry

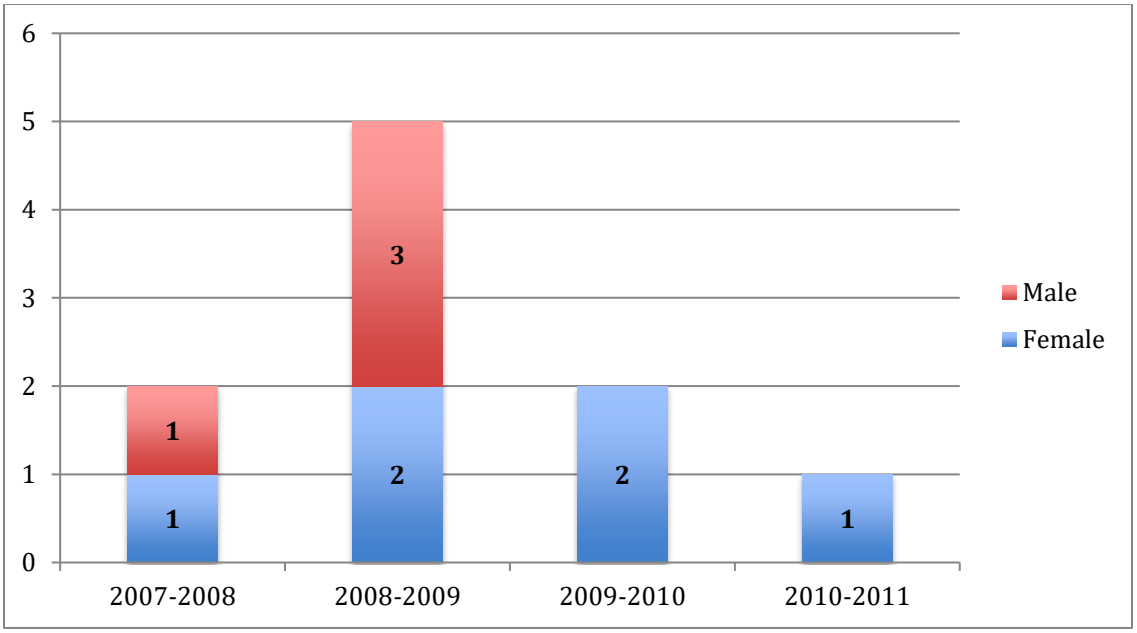

Figure 3. Diversity Scholars Program Cohorts

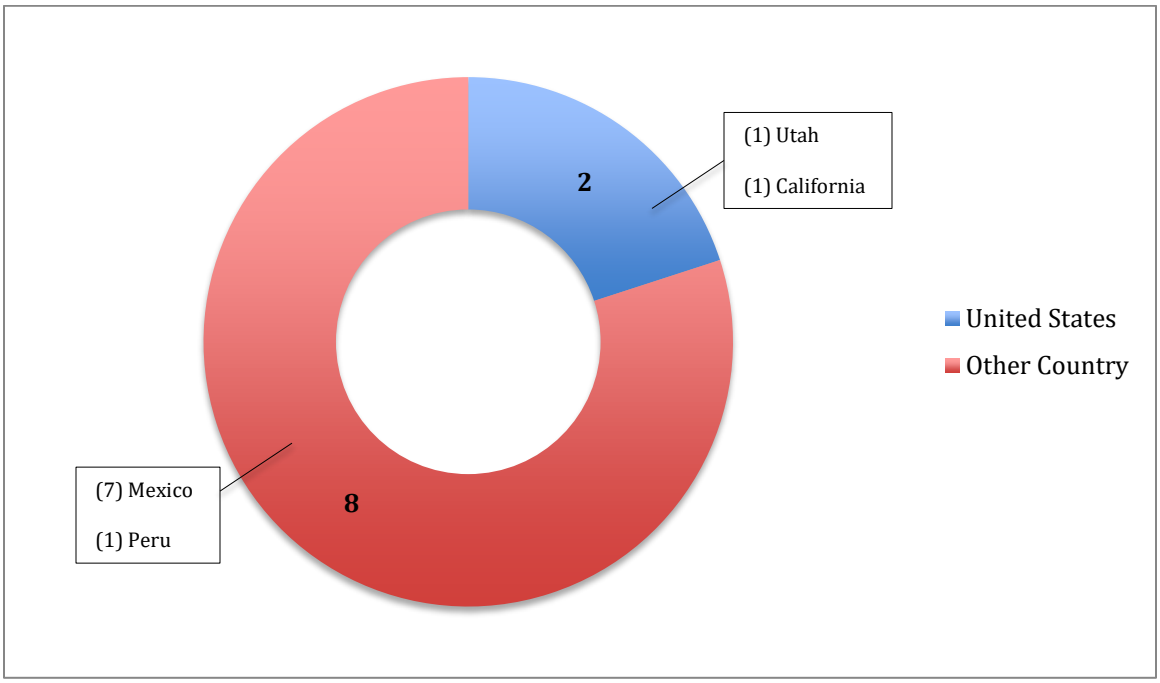

Figure 4. Diversity Scholars Program Birth Place

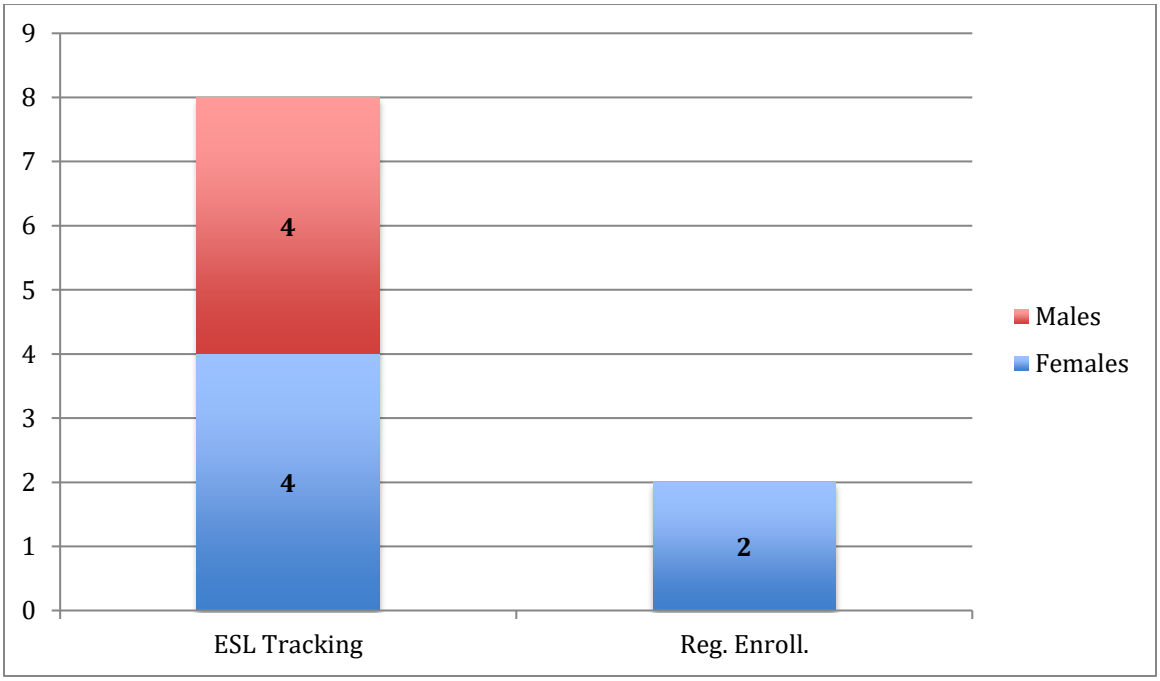

Figure 5. Diversity Scholars Program ESL Tracking

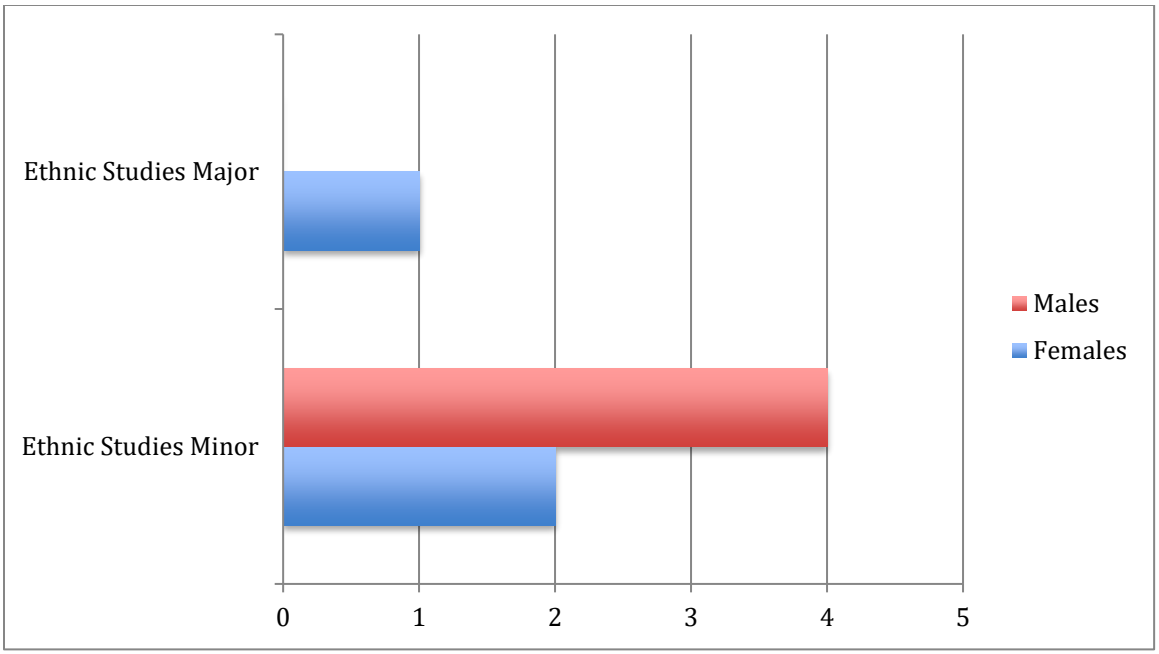

Figure 6. Ethnic Studies Interest

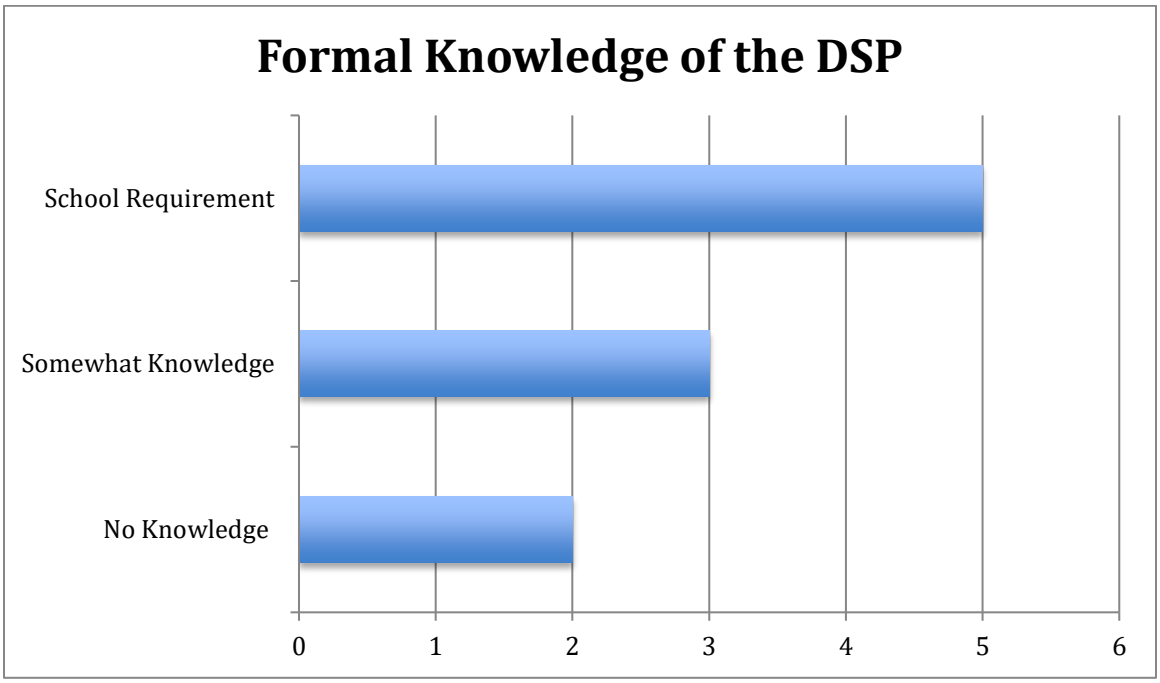

Figure 7. Formal Knowledge of the DSP

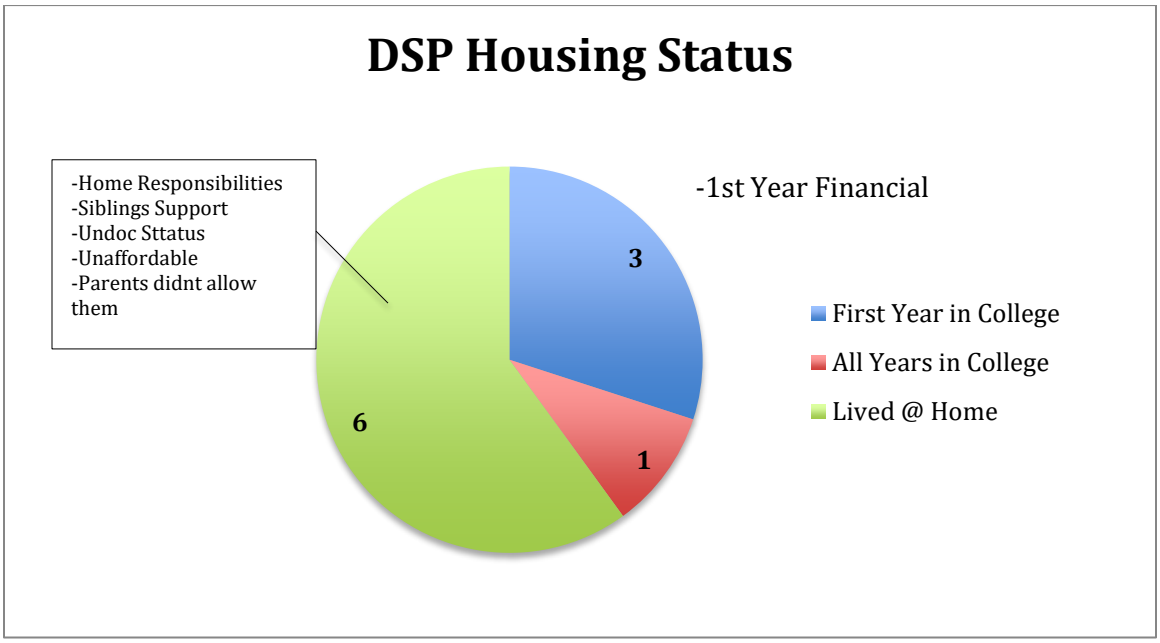

Figure 8. Diversity Scholars Program Housing Status

Table 2. Information on Diversity Scholars

#	DSP Part.	Attended Grad School	B.A. Grad	Career	Prior CSL Experience	Home Responsibilities	FOC after DSP	Siblings?	Location
1	Eva	No	[IMU] May 2015- Sociology	Mother, Worked at Comunidades Unidas	Parents were community leaders/ Organizers	Translation	Yes	Youngest, three older brothers	SLC
2	Jamie	Started Masters program in Social Work at USC	Transfer to CSU Northridge- Criminal Justice	Married, Youth Case Manager		Translation help with store	Yes	Oldest	Oceanside, Ca.
3	Eduardo	Graduated 2016 from Northwestern Law w/ Juris Doctor	[IMU] May 2012- Law School	Law Student	No	Translation	Yes	Oldest	Seattle, Washington
4	Luis	Masters/Doc Program	[IMU] May 2012 Gender Studies	Bilingual Health Educator	Church services	Translation	Yes	Oldest	Chicago
5	Consuelo	Finishing Master's of Science in Mining Engineering	[IMU] May 2014 B.A. Engineering	Grad Student	No	Translation care for siblings	No	Oldest	SLC
6	Jose	UofU May 2016 Master's in ELP	[IMU] May B.A. Gender Studies	Grad Student	Mestizo Arts Activist	Translation Transportation	Yes	Oldest	SLC
7	Rafael	UofU May 2016 Master's in ELP	[IMU] Summer 2013 B.A. Gender Studies	Teacher at Mana Academy	Mestizo Arts Activist	Translation	Yes	Youngest, Older Brother	SLC
8	Lili	No	[IMU] May 2015 B.A. Sociology	Mother, Teacher at Mana Academy	Political High School Walkouts	Translation	Yes	Oldest, one brother	SLC
9	Ana	No	[IMU] May 2014 B.A. Business Marketing	Marketing for a non-profit organization	Formal SL HS Experience	Translation	No	Oldest, One brother	SLC
10	Erica	No	CUNY Dec 2008 B.A. International Studies	Case Manager working with children w disabilities	No	Translation Transportation care for siblings	Yes	Oldest, one brother, one sister	NYC

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